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OPINION METER

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INSIDE

NATION



The Supreme Court dives into a historic debate on gay rights.

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WORLD



It's not over yet for Amanda Knox.

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FOCUS



If history is any judge, the U.S. government will be paying for its wars for the next century.

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Surveillance camera led to ID of alleged burglars. PAGE 2

Inos retains AG San Nicolas, Demapan. PAGE 3

House OKs Article 12 initiative

» 'Some degree' of Chamorro, Carolinian blood to own land in CNMI

» Another Article 12 initiative introduced giving options to landowners

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives unanimously passed yesterday afternoon Rep. Felicidad Ogumoro's (R-Saipan) proposed change to the CNMI Constitution's Article 12 to allow any U.S. citizen with "at least some degree" of Chamorro or Carolinian blood to be considered a person of Northern Marianas descent who can own land in the CNMI.



Ogumoro

Another Article 12 initiative, authored by Vice Speaker Frank Dela Cruz (IR-Saipan), was also introduced yesterday. It gives each landowner the option to subject their land to the current land alienation provision for "at least 25 years" before it could be removed.

Currently, only those with at least 25 percent NMD blood can

See HOUSE on Page 4

Man sets woman on fire

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A man walked up to a woman just as she was about to enter her car in a store's parking lot in San Antonio, doused her with flammable liquid, and set her on fire on Tuesday night.

Employees of Antonio Supermarket extinguished the fire on the woman as well as on her vehicle, police said yesterday.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Sgt. Thomas Blas Jr. said the victim, a 48-year-old woman, was admitted to the Commonwealth Health Center for second-degree burns on both hands and her entire back.

Blas described the unidentified male as possibly an Asian, who was wearing at the time a white T-shirt with a pair of

See MAN on Page 4



STARTING 'EM YOUNG

Aging Center clients Meryalen Conrad, Maria T. Salinas, and Paulina M. Remengesau demonstrate the art of weaving to Girl Scouts of the NMI during their visit yesterday morning. About a dozen Girl Scouts took part in yesterday's activity aimed at educating the young learners about local culture while enjoying fun interaction with the island's elderly.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

See story and photos on Page 9

Sen. Ayuyu's April 1 trial vacated

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has vacated the April 1 jury trial of Sen. Juan M. Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) and issued a written order that disqualified attorney Joaquin Torres and the Torres Brothers law firm as counsel for Ayuyu.

In an order Tuesday, Manglona vacated the trial date and instead set a status conference for April 1 at 9am.

According to court records, Senate president Ralph Torres (R-Saipan) is a potential witness of the U.S. government in Ayuyu's criminal cases. The Senate president is brother of Joaquin Torres, who is Ayuyu's counsel and a member of the Tor-

res Brothers law firm.

The prosecution alerted the court and Ayuyu last week, March 20, to a possible conflict of interest between Joaquin Torres and Ralph Torres.

On Friday, March 22, Manglona disclosed her tentative ruling to disqualify Joaquin Torres and the law firm as counsel for Ayuyu.

In her written order on Tuesday, Manglona said the charges in these cases arise from an alleged conspiracy to unlawfully transport Mariana fruit bats, a threatened species, from Rota to Saipan on Oct. 17, 2010.

Manglona said the U.S. government has offered evidence that fruit bats were discovered in a box owned by Ayuyu and bound for Saipan on a Freedom Air flight from Rota.

See AYUYU on Page 4

» Senate president Ralph Torres tagged as possible US govt witness



Ayuyu



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Local

Surveillance camera led to ID, arrest of burglary suspects

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A surveillance camera at DFS Galleria in Garapan led to the identification and arrest on Tuesday of two suspects in the burglary at an apartment unit in Kolblerville where they stole money and items from visiting Russian and Japanese ballerinas.

Habitual offender Cheyenne P. Sablan, 30, and a male juvenile were taken to Superior Court yesterday afternoon for their initial court appearance.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed a \$30,000 cash bail for Sablan's temporary

release. The case against the juvenile was sealed.

Police detective Jeffrey I. Norita stated in his report that a police officer responded on March 16, 2013, at 11:24pm to a burglary and theft incident at the Turnkey Housing in Kolblerville.

Preliminary investigation showed that at 5pm that day, Glushko Academy of Arts president Dr. Gene Eagle-Oden and his wife, Anna Glushko, along with the visiting ballerinas, secured the house before proceeding to the American Memorial Park's Amphitheater for a ballet performance.

When the couple and the ballerinas returned home at 11pm they found the house in disarray, with many items scattered on the floor.

Upon further inspection, the five ballerinas—four Russian and one Japanese—found that their belongings had been stolen, including a white Samsung netbook, a black Asus netbook, a black Sony cell phone, a black Nokia cell phone, an orange/black Samsung Corby cell phone, and a pink ACOS cell phone. The total value of the items was estimated at \$2,000.

Also stolen were 3,250 in Russian rubbles, 30,000 in Japa-

nese yen, and \$750 cash.

On March 18, police detective Jesse Dubrall interviewed a Russian man who received a call from his father that a male juvenile had approached him at a store in Garapan, showed him some Russian rubbles, and asked him to change them to U.S. currency.

The Russian man's father told the juvenile that he would think about it.

That same day, Norita and another detective proceeded to the store where they talked with another witness who claimed that a male juvenile asked her to change Russian money into

U.S. currency. The witness explained that they don't change Russian money and advised him to proceed to DFS.

Norita said he and Dubrall went to DFS, reviewed its surveillance camera, and identified the juvenile who approached the exchange booth.

The following day, March

19, Norita said he and another detective went to As Lito where they met the juvenile, who later confessed that it was him and Sablan who burglarized the apartment unit of Eagle-Oden.

Norita said the juvenile stated that it was Sablan who planned the burglary so they could purchase methamphetamine or "ice."

COTA eyes 2 vans of PSS

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority wants two vans owned by the Public School System turned over to the agency for the continued operation of the Saipan Call-a-Ride program.

Press secretary Angel A. Demapan confirmed yesterday that COTA administrator Thomas J. Camacho sent PSS a request for this since last year but there has been no response to date.

The vans were purchased using FTA funds through PSS for the Saipan Call-a-Ride program.

COTA is the agency now directly authorized to receive funding from the Federal Transit Administration. FTA used to give the funds to PSS so it could buy, maintain, and run school buses.

"Since the middle part of last year, COTA has been requesting PSS to transfer the ownership of two accessible vans purchased by FTA funds through PSS for the Saipan Call-a-Ride. In fact, one of the vehicles is on Tinian sitting idle while the other is here on Saipan at the administration building parking lot, sitting idle," said Ca-

macho yesterday.

Without the official transfer of these assets, COTA is unable to use the two vehicles and repair them for the use of the Saipan Fixed-Flex Route and Para-Transit System that's being planned to go online before the end of this year.

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D., was off-island yesterday.

Camacho said it's COTA's hope that it will work with PSS in assessing the Commonwealth's public transportation needs for the benefit of the entire Commonwealth.

According to Camacho, a public transportation system—once built—will be available to the entire community.

He cited the 2010 U.S. Census, which showed 3,728 households without private transportation and 3,781 workers that walk to work or their jobsites.

Camacho also cited a student survey conducted by Northern Marianas College in spring 2012 that indicated that 46 percent of students surveyed will use public transportation if available. Some 32 percent said they are "not sure," possibly depending on the fare if it is affordable.

Mayor's office, Forestry tie-up to get rid of rotting trees

The Saipan Mayor's Office will work closely with the CNMI Forestry under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources to address the issue of rotting trees on island.

Mayor Donald G. Flores emphasized the need to remove these trees because of the threat they pose to the safety of the public.

Last Wednesday, a decaying flame tree fell along Beach Road close to the Borja Funeral Home. Fortunately, Flores said, no passerby got hurt and no vehicle or other property was damaged.

Flores said he is scheduled to meet with state forester Vic Deleon Guerrero Jr. to talk about how to get rid of these rotting trees.

He said this collaboration is critical since Forestry maintains a list or directory that identifies areas with decaying trees; his office can take charge of cutting them down.

"We can start with that list

and prioritize which among these trees are more dangerous for the public and need to be cut down right away," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

However, Flores disclosed that the Mayor's Office lacks heavy equipment to do the task. He said he wrote to the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation and attached photos of the flame tree that fell last week to support his request to procure a bucket truck worth \$40,000.

According to Flores, he has asked Rep. Tony Agulto and Rep. Larry Guerrero of Precinct V to support his request.

He added that the bucket truck can serve not just the lawmakers' constituents but the entire community.

"The clock is ticking. We don't want to wait until something bad happens to someone. \$40,000 is nothing compared to having someone get hurt because of these rotting trees," said Flores. *(Clarissa David)*

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Air Force to inspect CHC

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

A four-member team from the U.S. Air Force in Guam is expected at the Commonwealth Health Center today to conduct an airfield assessment and tour of the public hospital.

The group's inspection and visit is being coordinated by U.S. Air Force Capt. Eric M. Johnson of the 36th Contingency Response Group in Andersen Air Force Base in Guam.

Johnson is a flight surgeon and the expeditionary medicine flight commander. He will be joined by three other members: Navy Lt. Commander Charlie Subbiondo, Navy Lt. Ryan Kroning, and Air Force Technical Sgt. Greg Arnold.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Juan N. Babauta confirmed the military visit yesterday.

He said the group will particularly assess the hospital emergency helipad and the CHC emergency room in an aim to improve the medical evacuation, or medevac, mission in the CNMI.

The planned visit and assessment is being described as a "rare opportunity" for the hospital.

"It is good the military is interested in conducting an assessment of the hospital emergency helipad and our overall medevac policy. Director Warren Villagomez was actually working on this early last year, creating an environment of safety surrounding the helipad perimeter," said Babauta.

The visitors are also expected to meet with CHC personnel and officials.

Also expected to join the hospital tour are representatives of the Fire Department for discussions on emergency response services. The group's assessment is scheduled from 1pm to 4pm.

According to CHC Emergency Preparedness director Warren Villagomez, this is the first time for the Air Force to inspect the hospital's helipad and would go a long way toward verifying its capability.

Helipads are common features in hospitals, serving to facilitate medevacs or air ambulance transfers of patients to trauma units or to accept patients from remote areas without local hospitals or facilities capable of providing the level of emergency care required.

Based on the corporation's internal assessment, Villagomez said the CHC helipad is "airworthy," "available," and can stand the test of time. The work of these experts, he said, will help the corporation in its effort to further improve medevac in the region.

Villagomez said the hospital's helipad is rarely used because the corporation often uses commercial air and the U.S. Coast Guard for the emergency transfer of patients.

Inos retains AG San Nicolas, Demapan, Zoning's Ayuyu

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos announced yesterday that he is keeping Attorney General Joey Patrick San Nicolas, press secretary Angel A. Demapan, and Commonwealth Zoning Board member Natalie Mable E. Ayuyu, while at the same time appointing Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero to serve as a Board of Education's non-voting member to represent non-public schools.

The governor did not accept the courtesy resignations of San Nicolas, Demapan, and Ayuyu. These are the latest decisions that Inos and Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider have made as part of their ongoing performance review of Cabinet members.

"We sincerely appreciate their contributions and believe that they will continue to be assets to our administration and the people we serve. We will continue to expect the highest standards of public service from them and every member of our Cabinet," Inos said in a statement.

Demapan, when asked for comment, said he is grateful

for the governor and lieutenant governor's confidence in keeping him as press secretary.

He said he submitted his courtesy resignation shortly after Inos and Hofschneider were sworn in "to give them the opportunity to re-organize the composition of their Cabinet to their liking."

"While I have worked closely with Gov. Inos during his term as lieutenant governor, I believed that he still needed to make organizational decisions in line with the new administration's goals and objectives. [Yesterday], I was officially informed of the governor and lieutenant governor's decision to not accept my resignation. I am more than willing and very much excited to take this journey with them and the Cabinet as they endeavor to bring much needed resolution to the many issues besetting our Commonwealth. ...I will continue to discharge my duties faithfully

and to the best of my ability," Demapan said.

The governor also said Ayuyu's service on the Zoning Board will be beneficial to the community. The Senate confirmed Ayuyu's nomination only in November.

"As an active member of the business community, we believe Ms. Ayuyu will continue to be an asset on the board as she participates in making decisions that will benefit the community and the private sector," Inos said.

Other Zoning Board members also turned in their courtesy resignations including board chair Diego C. Blanco but Demapan said theirs remain pending as of yesterday.

Meanwhile, Mount Carmel's Deleon Guerrero will begin serving BOE immediately as his

appointment does not require the Senate's advice and consent. Deleon Guerrero is a former elected member of BOE. *See related story on Page 13.*

In other news, the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations will hold a public hearing on the governor's nomination of former senator Maria Frica T. Pangelinan to serve as a member of the Marianas Public Land Trust board.

The public hearing will be on April 2, Tuesday, at 10am in the Senate chamber on Capital Hill.

EAGI Committee chair Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian) encourages the public to submit written testimony before the public hearing, but oral testimony will also be received during the public hearing.

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Delta donates tickets for arts festival raffle prizes



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Delta Air Lines sales and marketing representatives Christopher A. Concepcion and Esther Sound present the ceremonial round-trip tickets to the 32nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival Committee members in a ceremony at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delta Air Lines is committed to the arts in the CNMI with its sponsorship of the 32nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival.

The airline company has donated two round-trip tickets to any Delta U.S. destination, making Delta Air Lines an "Exclusive" sponsor for the biggest outdoor arts event in the Commonwealth. It is the highest level of sponsorship awarded to companies, organizations or individuals that provide monetary or in-kind donation worth \$10,000 or more.

Christopher A. Concepcion, sales and marketing representative, said Delta Air Lines has been a proud supporter of the annual event that features a wide selection of artwork from traditional or contemporary artists.

"We're pleased to be able to continue our support for the arts in the CNMI. We wish the organizers a very successful event," he said.

The 32nd Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, which is slated for April 19 to 21 at the Civic Center Park in Susupe, will also showcase presentations of local and guest performing groups and musicians, art demonstrations, and an

array of festival food favorites for an enjoyable weekend with family and friends.

"We couldn't be more appreciative of Delta Air Lines, which has been a staunch partner of the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture in making our largest and signature annual event possible," said council executive director Angel S. Hocog.

Hocog said the donated tickets will serve as the grand prize for the raffle draw to be held on the last day of the festival.

"The preservation, promotion, and perpetuation of our culture through the

arts becomes more significant because the council continues to make great effort in seeking and sustaining valued partners that support the council and our local artists," he added.

According to Hocog, the corporate sponsorship of Delta Air Lines would be influential as the council endeavors to bring the people and culture of the Northern Marianas to neighboring island territories. This year's festival will feature delegations from Kiribati and Chuuk.

"Through the company's patronage, the council, through the festival committee, would be able to promote friendship and camaraderie by bridging island cultures," Hocog told *Saipan Tribune*.

Hocog urged local artists to sign up for a booth at a minimal fee of \$50 for registered artists and \$150 for non-registered artists to exhibit their fine artwork.

"Only about a dozen booths remain available on a first-come, first-served basis so we encourage all interested artists to reserve their booth before it runs out," he said.

Hocog emphasized that the Logistics and Enforcement Committee will roam the festival grounds to ensure that all artwork for sale are made on island.

To become a sponsor or for more information, visit the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture in Capital Hill next to the post office or call 322-9982 or 83.

AYUYU

From Page 1

The judge said the U.S. government alleged that Ayuyu admitted to a Freedom Air employee that the box was his and told the employee that the bats were "for a lawyer on Saipan."

The U.S. government alleges that Ayuyu then called Ralph Torres once from Rota and that, soon after Ayuyu arrived on Saipan, Ralph Torres called the defendant twice.

Ralph Torres then allegedly called his brother, Joaquin Torres, and spoke with the latter for more than five minutes, then called the defendant once more.

Manglona said that in a voluntary interview with U.S. government agents, Ralph Torres stated he could not remember the specifics of the phone calls.

Joaquin Torres and his brother and law partner Victorino Torres affirmed that they do not recall any conversation with Ralph Torres about this matter that would come within the attorney-client privilege.

Nonetheless, Joaquin and Victorino Torres agreed that the possibility of having to cross-examine their brother Ralph Torres presents a potential conflict.

Manglona said that even without Ralph Torres' testimony, it may come out through the telephone subscriber logs that Ralph Torres spoke with Ayuyu and then with Joaquin Torres on the evening of Oct. 17, 2012.

On Monday, court-appointed conflicts counsel Vicente Salas advised the

court that he agrees with the U.S. government that the possibility of Ralph Torres testifying will create a non-waivable conflict of interest.

Manglona said the sequence of telephone calls after Ayuyu's flight from Rota to Saipan on Oct. 17, 2012, raises an unacceptable risk that Joaquin Torres may become an unsworn witness.

"The government may introduce the subscriber logs to support testimony by the Freedom Air employee that defendant told him the box of fruit bats was for a Saipan lawyer," Manglona said.

The judge said the logs show that shortly after landing on Saipan, Ayuyu called Ralph Torres, then Ralph Torres called Joaquin Torres, who is a Saipan lawyer and Ayuyu's lawyer.

"The prospect of jurors' gazing over to the defense table and wondering what Joaquin Torres would say if he were called to the stand is intolerable," Manglona said.

Even if Joaquin Torres does not testify, Manglona said the jurors would inevitably study his demeanor and his body language and perhaps draw improper inferences from their observations.

"Such inferences would only be intensified if, in closing argument to the jury, Joaquin Torres were able to state that there is no evidence the phone calls had anything to do with fruit bats," Manglona said.

"It is immaterial whether the inferences were favorable or unfavorable to Ayuyu; either way, they would corrupt the truth-seeking mission of the proceedings by bringing into consideration evidence not properly admitted," she said.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



A happy blessed birthday to MeMong C. Teregeyo and to Auntie Gloria D. Reyes! Greetings come from the family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy 2nd birthday to Vinesha Juanet LG. Agulto! Your smile, your laugh, the funny things you do—it all brings so much joy. We cherish every second of it. Love you to the moon and back, from Mom, Dad, Rin, VJ, and the family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to Wilma Atalig! Words are not enough to express the gratitude that you deserve for all that you have done for us throughout the years. May you have many more blessed years to come! We love you! Greetings come from your family and friends.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HOUSE

From Page 1

own land in the CNMI under the NMI Constitution's Article 12.

By a vote of 18-0 with two absences, the House passed Ogomoro's House Legislative Initiative 18-1. This was more than the 14 votes required yesterday to pass.

This initiative still has to pass the Senate, for the question to be placed on the ballot in the 2014 general elections.

The ultimate decision rests with voters.

Ogomoro said her measure will help ensure that NMDs will be able to pass on their land to their children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and so on, even if they fall below the current 25-percent NMD blood requirement.

She said she will also be seeking the Senate's support for her initiative.

"I'm crossing my fingers. But I do know that they also recognize the importance of lowering that [blood quantum] so we can allow our kids, generations to come, to be qualified as persons of Northern Marianas descent to be able to own land," Ogomoro said in an interview after the session.

HLI 18-1 proposes to amend Article 12, Section 4, "in order to legally provide that a person who has at least some degree of Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian blood and who is a citizen or national of the United States shall be deemed a bona fide person of Northern Marianas descent for all purposes under Article 12, upon providing evidence to the Superior Court."

The court has to certify that a person is an NMD.

House members discussed the initiative at length before voting.

Rep. Trenton Conner (Ind-Tinian), during discussion, asked whether those who have not been certified by the court as a person of NMD could vote on the initiative.

Vice Speaker Frank Dela Cruz (IR-Saipan) also asked whether those who have not registered with the Northern Marianas Descent Registry would be precluded from voting on this initiative.

House counsel Joe Taijeron referred to Public Law 17-40, which states that only the Northern Marianas Descent Registry is the official registry of NMDs "in any and all elections...that require only persons of Northern Marianas descent to vote in such election..."

Ogomoro said there have been some 5,000 who have registered with the NMD Registry to date.

"It is incumbent upon applicants to present documents or evidence that they are NMD, maybe a birth certificate and some other documents," she said during the session.

Floor leader Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) also asked whether those NMDs who moved to Guam would also qualify.

Ogomoro referred Demapan to Section 4 of the initiative.

It says for purposes of determining NMD, a person shall be considered to be a full-blooded Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian if that person was born or domiciled in the Northern Mariana Islands by 1950 and was a citizen of the Trust

Territory of the Pacific Islands before termination of the Trusteeship with the Commonwealth.

Rep. Roman Benavente (IR-Saipan) asked whether the 1950 timeline could be pushed back to Japanese era, to which House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (IR-Saipan) said the term NMD is a "political" definition rather than one that is based on "ethnicity" or "race."

Press secretary Angel A. Demapan, when asked for the administration's comment, said Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider are cognizant that after so many years, there are many NMDs who have families from interracial marriages and as a result, the administration views this latest initiative as "a valuable measure to ensure that landownership is not lost along these lines."

"However, given the nature of any initiative, Gov. Inos and Lt. Gov. Hofschneider do recognize that the voters must be adequately educated about this issue as ultimately, the decision rests with them," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

The House Natural Resources Committee chaired by Rep. Anthony T. Benavente (IR-Saipan) recommended the passage of the initiative "so our constituents can decide whether having at least some degree of Northern Marianas Chamorro or Northern Marianas Carolinian blood or a combination thereof or an adopted child of a person of Northern Marianas Descent if adopted while under the age of 18 years to acquire permanent and long-term interest in real property within the Commonwealth will be in their best interest."

MAN

From Page 1

black slacks.

"Suspect might have burn injuries on hands and was last seen fleeing the scene on foot heading south toward the Pacific Islands Club area," Blas said.

He said that patrol officers were dispatched Tuesday at 9:09pm to a reported vehicle on fire at the San Antonio Supermarket.

Fire rescue and medics also responded after receiving a report that a woman was injured in the incident.

Preliminary investigation conducted by patrol officer Myron Laniyo showed that the victim ran into the San Antonio Supermarket, screaming for help.

Store employees said the victim had no shirt on and was only wearing a bra and that her pants were on fire. The employees immediately extinguished the flames and called 911 for police's assistance.

The same employees learned that the

victim's car, which was in the parking lot, was on fire too so they went out and stamped out the blaze.

Blas said that DPS Criminal Investigation Bureau detectives and Fire arson investigators learned that the victim was about to enter her car when the suspect appeared and pushed her from behind into the vehicle.

The suspect then poured liquid on the victim and set her on fire. She then ran into the store for help. The police have yet to identify the type of liquid used in the attack.

Blas said that CIB detectives and arson investigators are still working on the case and are encouraging anyone who has any information about this crime or may have seen suspicious person(s) or activity between 8:30pm to 9:09pm on Tuesday in the vicinity of the San Antonio Supermarket to call CIB at 664-9046/9051 or the Crime Stoppers Tips Line at 234-7272.

Crime Stoppers pays up to a \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest.

Administration, Legislature urged to act on PSS' 'wish list'

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

CNMI State Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero is urging the Executive Branch and the Legislature to immediately act on several items on the Public School System's "wish list," the top of which is a higher budget for public schools.

PSS, which is currently funded by the local government for only \$31 million, is asking for \$40 million next fiscal year so it could restore a hundred teaching positions that were eliminated in the previous year.

Guerrero also wants the Legislature to help it lower its utility costs to at least the same rate as businesses and eliminate late fees and fines imposed on schools. PSS currently pays at government rate, which is higher.

He is also asking the Inos administration to absorb the outstanding retirement employer contribution balances of PSS with the NMI Retirement Fund.

Guerrero also urged lawmakers to enact legislation that will outline the selection process for the teacher representative to the Board of Education, which has been vacant in the last four years.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos was also encouraged to appoint the non-public school representative to the Board of Education, also vacant for three years now. *See related story on Page 13.*

Despite a plan to build a new Koblerville Junior High School to address the overcrowding at Hopwood Junior High School,

Guerrero admitted that funding has yet to be identified and committed for the project. He asked for capital improvement project monies be tapped to make this happen.

» Guerrero eyes CIP monies for new junior high school



Guerrero

Also on the "wish list" is to transfer the Child Care Program back to the school system. "The children need to be provided with a continuous and seamless progression in education of the total child starting at the day care center onward to Head Start, kinder, elementary, and high school. This program will support our P-3 Initiative," said Guerrero.

In lieu of revelations that PSS can no longer procure new buses for students beginning this school year, Guerrero pleaded with the administration to revisit the federal transit funding so that the pupil transportation program will not be hampered.

Guerrero also asked the Senate and House education committees to update and strengthen local education laws.

The BOE is also concerned about the fate of the Northern Marianas College. If the college does not correct its show-cause status by Oct. 15, 2013, it may have to close down. "Our students will have nowhere to go for college education on island, and the Commonwealth loses. We want to let you know that the Board of Education and the Public School System stand ready to assist and perhaps take over the operation of NMC, if necessary. Keep in mind the words "comprehensive and seamless transition,"" added Guerrero.

Kid's playground at AMP to get makeover treatment

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan will partner with Seafix, Inc. and Joeten Motors for the repair work on the children's playground at the American Memorial Park.

Rotarian Dennis Yoshimoto said at the club's Tuesday meeting that the repair work is scheduled to begin on April 4.

The Rotary Club of Saipan donated about two decades ago the playground. It is now off limits due to its deteriorated condition and the danger it poses to children.

While the group determined in October last year that they are not responsible for the maintenance of the equipment, they agreed that they have a "moral obligation" to do it.

Part of the work that would be done is the refabrication of the metal in the equipment to

remove dangerous edges, as well as putting plastic rubber coating to protect the refabricated metal parts.

The project would include the installation of new swing sets that were purchased during the term of past president Pete Igitol.

"I believe that the repair work at the playground will be completed expeditiously," said Yoshimoto.

Established in 1968, Rotary Club of Saipan now has more than 30 members who help conduct projects and activities that benefit the island community. It is one of the over 34,200 service clubs dedicated to upholding the principles established by Rotary International, including providing humanitarian services, encouraging high ethical standards in all vocations, and building goodwill and peace in the world.

NMC to graduate its largest class in five years

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College will be graduating this semester its biggest graduating class in five years.

This will be the institution's 33rd Commencement Exercise and will take place on May 25 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

NMC is expected to confer associate and bachelor's degrees on about 180 students—a 52-percent increase over last year's graduation numbers.

College records indicate that the bulk of the graduating class will come from the associate degree in liberal arts program, with a potential 62 graduates, followed by the associate de-

gree in nursing program, with 35 graduating students; associate degree in business with seven; business administration with emphasis on accounting with six; business management with seven; computer applications with nine; criminal justice with nine; hospitality management with eight; and associate degree in natural resources management with two.

For bachelor degrees, elementary education concentration has the biggest potential number of graduates at 20; rehabilitation and human services concentration has 10; and bachelor's degree in early childhood concentration, four.

Saipan Tribune learned that this year would be a first for students to graduate with a bach-

elor's degree in Education with concentrations in "Early Childhood" or "Rehabilitation and Human Services." These concentrations, along with the other concentrations at the NMC School of Education, were introduced about four years ago.

Besides these potential graduates, NMC is also expecting to confer certificates to a large number of students who have completed the GED and Adult High School Diplomas, the numbers of which were not available as of yesterday.

"The significant increase in the number of graduates is a testimony not only to the hard work and dedication of our students and their families but also the commitment and educational passion of our college

personnel," said NMC president Sharon Hart, Ph.D., yesterday, adding that they are extremely proud of all the students who are graduating, especially those who have had to overcome significant challenges and obstacles to earn their degrees.

"Graduation marks an important milestone in their lives, and we are inviting everyone in the community to join us for this joyous event," added Hart.

Several awards will also be presented at the May 25 ceremony, including the leadership award, which will be awarded by Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider. Academic achievement awards will also be handed out to students with the highest grade point averages.

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Saipan chamber outlines its education agenda for 2013

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will reach for higher goals in 2013 when it comes to preparing Saipan high school students for entry into the Saipan workforce, attending college at the Northern Marianas College or off-island institutions, or getting themselves ready to begin looking for a job.

The SCC announced Chamber projects and events for 2013 in developing the local workforce. The SCC Education Committee, chaired by board member Velma Palacios and Board of Regent Janice Tenorio, have received board approval for the 2013 projects.

On April 6, 2013, the Chamber will present a four-hour workshop session for high school seniors titled "I'm Graduating Soon, Now What?", where students will receive instruction and training from

Chamber volunteers on careers, personal budgeting, job resumé writing and interview skills, and other personal and family considerations. Four or five instructors offer these sessions as originally designed by former Chamber president Jim Arenovski. The Saturday morning session will be offered at the Kanoa Resort.

The Chamber has set an April 19 deadline for submission of applications for the annual SCC college scholarship awards for college-bound students. Five \$2,000 college scholarship awards will be presented to the Chamber selection committee-screened winners bound for college. An additional \$2,000 college scholarship will be awarded to one student already enrolled in college for the first time in the annual scholarship awards program. Applications are available

at the SCC office in Garapan and at high school counselor offices. The awards will be presented at the June SCC general membership luncheon.

In December, the Chamber will host its annual Student Discovery Day where students will shadow a Chamber company member administrator to see what it's like in the workplace, then

have lunch with all the Chamber members at the Dec. 4, 2013, SCC general membership luncheon meeting. Individual Chamber members will sponsor students interested in the businesses and careers of their choice.

Chamber president Alex Sablan stated: "Although there's an increased effort to get our local workforce into the market-

place, and there are great efforts by people like Jim Arenovski at the Bridge Project and Tony Pellegrino at the Northern Marianas Trade Institute and the NMC efforts ongoing, the Chamber will continue its own focus on education as the solution to our economic and human resource dependency on foreign national labor. There will come

a day when we will be able to fill our private sector with our own trained, educated, and qualified employees."

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1959 and incorporated in 1976, is the largest private business organization in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Chamber works to promote and protect business, economic and civic interests, and the general health and welfare of the islands. (SCC)

DEQ extends comment period for pesticide regs to April 26

The Division of Environmental Quality has granted a 30-day extension of the comment period for the proposed CNMI Pesticide Management Regulations, as published in the Jan. 28, 2013, publication of the *Commonwealth Registrar*. Written comments are now due on Friday, April 26, 2013.

"We want to receive inquiries or comments about the proposed regulations because there are impacts to the regulated community," said Reina Camacho, manager for the DEQ pesticide and storage tank program.

DEQ has made attempts to publicize its changes to the regulations, but no comments were received by the original deadline of March 28, 2013. The regulations apply to all persons that import, sell or distribute, use, handle, and or apply pesticides.

"The reason for the new regulation is to ensure the proper management of pesticide use,

sale and that state (local) requirements also meet the federal standards and as well as practices that are applicable to the Islands," said Camacho.

To provide comments, follow these simple steps:

Step 1 – Read the proposed regulations. The proposed pesticide regulations are available for viewing and or downloading at the agency website www.deq.gov.mp

Step 2 – Write your Comments. Please include the specific part or section and subsection for which you are commenting and what amendments you would like to be considered.

Step 3 – Submit your Comments. You will need to provide your first name and last name and contact information (phone, email or mailing address) so that DEQ can contact you for additional information or clarification. It is optional to include your occupation or pro-

fession; however, having this information, will be helpful in understanding your perspective.

Mail. Written comments must be addressed to DEQ director Frank M. Rabauliman. DEQ's mailing address is: P.O. Box 501304 Saipan, MP 96950. Comments received through mail must be postmarked by Friday, April 26, 2013.

Email. Comments submitted via email must be sent to storagetankspesticides@deq.gov.mp and must be received before the close of business day, 4:30pm on Friday, April 26, 2013.

Other suggestions for making sure your comments have the greatest possible impact:

Clearly indicate if you are for, or, against the proposed rule or some part of it and why. Regulatory decisions are based largely on law and science, and agency reviewers look for reasoning, logic, and

good science in comments they evaluate. Please note that simply stating your agreement or disagreement is not sufficient for DEQ to make changes; DEQ wants to know why it is important to you.

Include a copy of articles or other references that support your comments.

Only relevant material should be submitted. If an article or reference is in a foreign language, it must be accompanied by an English translation verified to be accurate. Translations should be accompanied by a copy of the original publication.

No extension after the Friday, April 26, 2013 will be granted. The agency needs to finalize the regulations and begin implementation. DEQ is located at the Gualo Rai Center on Chalan Pale Arnold; office hours are 7:30am to 4:30pm. Tel: 664-8500 and Fax: 664-8540. (DEQ)

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Veiovis to launch Veiovis Direct on March 15

Veiovis, a medical travel company, will launch a new local healthcare product under the Veiovis brand, Veiovis Direct, on March 15, 2013. Veiovis Direct is a healthcare program giving patients unlimited, convenient, and affordable access to the FHP Health Center on Saipan for comprehensive primary and

preventive care services.

"As healthcare costs continue to increase nationally and locally, direct primary care, a new model of health care delivery, is generating a buzz among small employers and uninsured individuals looking for a better way to manage their medical costs," said Nora Sablan, FHP Clinic manager. "Veiovis Direct will

serve as a healthcare program that will give patients convenient and affordable access to the FHP Health Center for comprehensive primary and preventive care services."

With Veiovis Direct, patients will have unlimited access to a set of direct primary care services at the FHP Health Center with no co-payments, co-insurance, or deductibles. Direct primary care services include but are not limited to wellness screenings, annual physicals, vaccinations, treatment for minor injuries, and other preven-

tive healthcare services.

"The cost for this program is very affordable is open to everyone regardless of insurance status or pre-existing conditions. The exact cost is dependant on the individual's age," said Sablan. For more information on Veiovis Direct, visit www.veiovis.com or call (680) 235-0994/6.

Reflecting the cohesiveness and convenience of the FHP system, the FHP Health Center Saipan houses various units for doctors' consultations, urgent care, preventive care, physicals, minor surgeries, x-ray, and laboratory services. An on-site retail pharmacy offers competitive rates for prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications. The entire facility is staffed by registered medical professionals and includes doctors with admitting privileges to the hospital. (PR)

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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 28, 2004

House wants authority over CIP, fed money

The House of Representatives wants to claim legislative authority over the disposal of capital improvement project funds allotted to the CNMI by the federal government, citing the absence of local statute that defines the procedure of who exactly has discretionary power to disburse the financial assistance monies. Ten House members present during a Rota session on Friday voted for the passage of House Bill 14-144 intended for this purpose, offered by Speaker Benigno R. Fitial. Fitial came up with the bill after consulting with the U.S. Department of the Interior.

House recalls two money measures in Rota session

House recalled two appropriation bills during a session here on Friday, reversing its previous action on the \$1.86 million classrooms funding measure (House Bill 14-62) and the bill reprogramming money for Precinct 3 projects (HB 14-57). Ten members present agreed to withdraw its rejection of HB 14-62, which the Senate earlier amended to give the Public School System "reprogramming" authority over funds earmarked for school infrastructure projects. The Senate amendment was accepted and HB 14-62 saw passage with finality. HB 14-57, which appropriates \$47,647 for the fencing and procurement of bleachers for the Lower Navy Hill sports facilities, was also recalled from the governor's desk.

Mar. 28, 2005

Renewal of fuel contract to cost CUC

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will face an average 11-percent increase in fuel expenses, should it decide to renew its multi-million-dollar fuel supply contract with Mobil Marianas Inc. CUC comptroller Sohale Samari disclosed that Mobil had given the utility firm three options for the contract renewal. The price quotations, he said, ranged from a variable price that starts with an 8-percent increase over the current contract price, to a fixed price with a 15-percent increase. "Should the board [of directors] accept the contract proposal that has come in from Mobil, we are looking at an average price increase of 11 percent," Samari said. "We haven't started our negotiations with Mobil yet. The board still has to come together and decide on how to approach Mobil's proposal."

\$36M settlement reached in suit vs Remeron maker

The Attorney General's Office said that consumers of an antidepressant drug may soon be entitled to cash recovery following a \$36-million settlement between the drug company and state attorneys general nationwide. The AGO said it is now waiting for court approval of the settlement between the states and drugmaker Organon USA Inc. and its parent company Akzo Nobel N.V., which manufactured the antidepressant drug Remeron and its generic equivalent, mirtazapine. Those who paid for the drugs from June 15, 2001 to Jan. 25, 2005-including the CNMI's Medicaid program, as well as government insurance and private insurance companies-could obtain cash recovery once the settlement becomes final, the AGO said.

Mar. 28, 2006

Firm wants to buy out power plants

Telesource CNMI, Inc. has proposed to buy out all of the cash-strapped government's power plants and other power generation assets on Saipan and vowed to quickly solve the island's power crisis. Telesource chief executive officer and president Nidal Zayed said the power crisis is one that needs a quick solution since the fate of the CNMI's economic recovery significantly relies on this. The proposal, however, deviates from the government's normal procurement procedures, which is usually a bidding process. In a recent letter to Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, a former executive director of the now defunct Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Zayed said his company is willing to sit down and negotiate with the government about the proposed buy-out.

\$3M suit filed vs Tottotville contractors

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. has filed a \$3-million lawsuit against the contractors of Tottotville, a subdivision of 45 homes in Koblerville. NMHC sued SSFM International Inc., Telesource CNMI Inc., and their insurers, Telebond Insurance Corp. and an unidentified insurance firm, for breach of contract, breach of express warranty, and violations of Consumer Protection Act and Building Safety Code. NMHC, through counsel F. Matthew Smith, asked the Superior Court to order the defendants to pay in excess of \$3 million to be used for the correction, replacement, repair of deficiencies and the proper completion of the subdivision.

Girls Scouts learn from *man'amko*

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

About a dozen Girl Scouts received weaving lessons from the *man'amko* when they made their first visit to the Aging Center yesterday morning.

The young girls, age 5 to 10 years old, learned how to weave palm fronds into baskets and *mwar mwar*, among others.

Five-year-old Maimai Peters said she made a key chain that she gave to her cousin, Pheona David, 11. Both girls said they found the activity fun and enjoyable.

President Tania P. David and vice president Laila Boyer of the Girl Scouts of the NMI led Wednesday's young participants who also had the chance to listen to stories from the island's elderly.

David said in an interview that they brought the girls to the center because they wanted them to participate in an activity that promotes community involvement and meaningful interaction.

"What better way for the Girl Scouts to learn than to interact with our *man'amko* who have been around for so long. Weaving is also something new to them so you can really see in their eyes that they're enjoying it," David



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Meryalen Conrad, left, shows the girls scouts how to weave palm fronds into a basket.

told *Saipan Tribune*.

She said that through the activity, the Girl Scouts of the NMI was able to impart to its members lessons regarding island culture and tradition, going green, morals, and values.

David said the visit to the seniors is only one among the many activities the group has lined up to mark the 101st anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the USA this year.

The largest organization for girls in the world, Girl Scouts of the USA aims to "build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place."

According to David, they aim to expose the girl scouts to a learning experience at least

once a month. The frequency is expected to increase in the summer when their members are on vacation from school.

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council president Maria T. Salinas said yesterday's event was a welcome mixture of the young and the old, which she hopes will happen more often.

"The activity is good not only for the children so they can learn something while they're young but also for the *man'amko* so they get a chance to interact with other people," she said.

Besides Salinas, the seniors who taught the Girl Scouts how to weave were Meryalen Conrad, new center clients Festie F. Billy and Paulina M. Remengesau, and Terry Sitae.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Aging Center client Terry Sitae, left, makes a girl scout wear her woven head gear as Girl Scouts of the NMI vice president Laila Boyer talks to another girl scout.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Girl scouts learn about weaving while listening to the stories of the seniors at the Aging Center.

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Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

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Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Don't spoil this happy fish story

After years of depletion, California's fish populations appear to be bouncing back. A study this month by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that hauls by fishing boats, which had been down as a result of years of overfishing, have been growing, along with earnings. The agency credits catch limits that were mandated by law in 1996 and slowly implemented over the next 15 years.

A February report by the Natural Resources Defense Council found that of 44 severely depleted stocks of fish nationwide that were under federal oversight, 48 percent had rebounded to target levels and an additional 16 percent had shown significant progress—a total of nearly two-thirds.

There's even more encouraging news. A preliminary study by California marine scientists indicates that the populations and average physical size of several key species of fish have grown in the six years since the state established a patchwork of marine reserves off the central coast; in many of these areas, no fishing is allowed. There now are similar protected areas all along the coast.

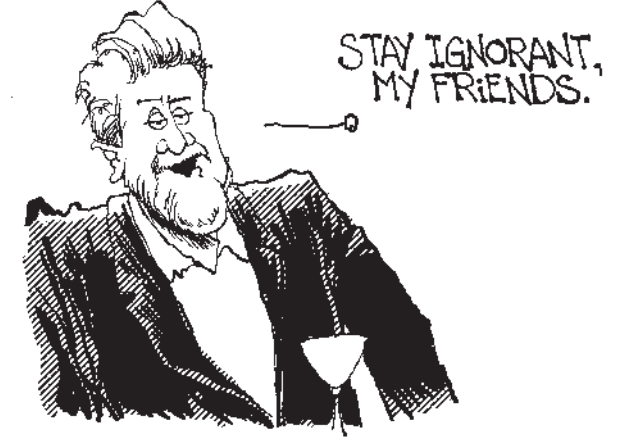
These findings are preliminary and somewhat mixed. Not all sea life is doing better, in this state or elsewhere, and restrictions on fishing have been particularly hard for small commercial businesses. But overall, this is the most optimistic news on the subject in a long time.

Catch limits and marine reserves appear to have yielded remarkable results in a very short time. Catch limits, when they are imposed and enforced correctly, stop overfishing and give stocks a chance to recover. (In many of the cases in which populations have not rebounded, part of the problem was that limits were set so loosely at first that overfishing still occurred.) California's marine protected areas, modeled on successful reserves in other countries, took things a step further by protecting the health of entire coastal ecosystems and acting as fish nurseries so that young fish had a better chance of surviving to maturity.

In addition, the international convention on endangered species, with 177 member nations and organizations, voted this month to sharply restrict overfishing of five species of shark. Tens of millions of sharks are killed each year for their fins, which fetch a high price for the Chinese delicacy of shark fin soup. In recent years, researchers have found that large sharks play an integral part in the balance of ocean life by keeping in check the population of mid-level predators that eat scallops, clams and other commercially valuable sea life.

Of course, restrictions have been hard on people who depend on the oceans' resources for their living. Some fishermen have gone out of business, and if the restrictions on fins from the five affected shark species is effective, more will lose their jobs, at least temporarily. Yet the fishing industry was already in grave danger, and on a much larger scale, before strong measures were adopted to restore the ocean environment. A healthier ocean provides more jobs and food.

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The most interesting man in Washington.

Tradision Kuaresma

Tiempun kuaresma ma'gas na tradision este siha na islas. Un' tiempu gi kada sakan 'nai ta rinueba i tinago yan sakrifisiun fina'pos i Saina ni mapunu' pot hita.

Deste antes, mapraktitika este na tiempu kumu tradision relihion natibu. Fitme masimientu gi ha'enen todus. Estague' na pisu 'nai ta ta'lon rinueba haf' tinago'ña i Si Yuus Tata ginen i sinko na leblo ni mapublika deste Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Kada ratu hu taitai este na patte gi biblia para bai' komprende mas tutuhon estorian i Nanalibreta, i humidde na sensian obidiente gi tinagu' Yuus Tataña. Ya maseha ha li'e haf' mamamaila', ti sumeha mumattit-gue' pot satbasion i kinilu siha gi pastahen enteru elmundu.

Unu gi mas makat hu komprende i sumen anchu na minesñon Santa Maria 'nai ha tatiye makastigan lahiña estake maklaba ya mapunu' gi kilu'us. Kada mattu este gi hinasoghu, mafattu kau haye gi entre hita lumañag matula'e, ñgofñigufe' sumen aplacha' na mukus, matobus 'nai poduñg sa esta yas, mapatek kalaguagña, machoneg 'nai ti ha lalañag i makat kilu'us ni ha u'uma, dispues makurona man-dañkulun hagian tituka'.

Tai malefag-hu 'nai tanores-yu' gi este na tiempu. Deste Huebes Santo esta todus seremonias Bietnes Santo yan pasgua—kinahulu' i Sainata—kulan masinset gi titanoshu. Banidosuyu' lokue' 'nai hu li'e hagahu ha tutucha un' nobena ni magpu' gi ha'enen pasguan resureksion. Sumen nama'aggem i esta ha tutuhon makreansan famaguonña linala' espirituat. Mauleg in' chegue este gi famaguon miyu lokue'. Mas u fan antau kareran niha mona gi maseha haf' na mattiru.

Gi todus finapos-mu, mas pasifiku hinasso-mu ni achog taimanu chinatsaga-mu, yangin enfin unna patte i Saina gi ha'ani-mu. Guiya este i hu sosoyu' gi familia na u yute' añklan espirituat sa' ni kuantu na chubasku, fitme ma-añkla botimu gi halom napu yan pagyu.

Tinilaikan Hineñge

Kontodu dinaña' familia madisgrana pot lamita tumulaika relihion niha. I pumalu masustene hineñgen Katolisismo gi hilu' fitme na tinatiyen finana'guen i Saina. Fuetsau finañagu chinatsaga gi halom rimulinon pagyun tinilaika.

Huñgan, kada unu libregue' gi disposision este na asunto. Lau guaha 'nai hu fagcha'e sige malabla 'sino disfruta i relihion Katolisismo.

Yangin un' ekuñgog satton haf' i mansañgan ti mapot un' soda na kontra pisun chat-rason na madiñgu relihion niha. Ni unu dumanche haf' ha sasañgan sa' puru botlu yan petsonat na eskusu layeye pot ti makomprende haf' sessu finatton i Saina gi tanu'.

Siña ha' tiyamu si pale, lau ti si pale ti relihion Katolisismo. Dispues sin ditension hu fafana' maseha haye na pale para hu ekspres-

By JOHN DELROSARIO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



sia hinasoghu piot gi haf' sinadahu fatsu gi setmoña. Guaha hu soda nuebu yan gada'. Hu pasensiaye estake gai tiempuyu' umadiñgane nos pot guahu lau pot i linahyan.

Ilegña un' missinariun Jehovah gi kulan fresku na esplikasion na i biblia ti ha sañgan pot i 'neni' na Niñu Jesus soluke pot 'patgon'. Hu faisen haf' tinateña gi estudiun relihion. Seru! Lau kulan mohon sabiun karisu 'nai sige ha lablague' pot i santa biblia.

Huñgan megai besis 'nai ta fagcha'e manlotgun hit gi didog yan aplacha' hoyun linala'. Gi hilu' este na chinatsaga, dudayu' kau pot relihion-mu na basnag hau. Lau un' soda' eskusumu 'nai umafagcha' te'ug na irada gi korasonmu yan sineda' mu otu relihion.

Los uttimu hu faisen kuantu yan haye yuus niha. Ha aka' hilaña ya mamatkilu. Era hu faisen haye gi entre dos na yuus niha umadiñgan gi tatten i troñku 'nai sessu si Yuus Tata ha kuentuse si Moses antes gi tiempun antigu.

I rason na hu mente este na asunto pot mampos ma-umenta mafabrika man-lache siha na attikulu kontra Katolisismo. Yangin finatsu ni hagu fumabrika kulan eskusu, atan ya un' faisen maisa hau haf' taimanu na ni mismu relihion-mu primet ti un' danche chachalan-mu? Dos na lache ti u huyuñg unu na dinanche sa' acha-lache.

■ ■ ■

'Nai inaña ya pininu' si nanaña as tataña, umatog i patgon gi tatten sufa estake mattu i polisia ya kinene'. 'Nos kuantos años malofan dispues ha tutuon i patgon madoktrina. Un' taloane finaisen ni maestraña haye ayu na tautau i maklalaba gi kilu'us. Ilegña, 'Tihu tuñgu', lau guiya sumohgue yan tumampe-yu' guihe na pueñge 'nai mapunu' si nana-hu'.

■ ■ ■

Pot chaleg: Mana'e i patgon bente sinku sientimos para u fahaman un' pidason lulug gi Ace Hardware. Lau kandi (candy) ha fahan ti lilug. Sige kumate gi hiyoñg tendan ha fafaisen i Saina ayudu. Pot dos besis ha chogue este. Ha li'e fina' ma'lag dispues poduñg i lilug.

I mina tres biahe, sige ta'lu kumate lau ti poduñg i lilug taimanu masusede dos besis gi alacha. Ha li'e ma'lag kandet ya 'nai tumalag hilu', ilegña i Saina na ti siña ha pula' i uttimu na lulug gi agapa' na kanaña 'sino guiya podung. A' Saina! Felis pasgua para todus. Si Yuus U bendise hit na sakan.

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Reforming immigration is vital for both national security and economic growth

WASHINGTON—As Washington debates how to fix America's broken immigration system, the time has come for realistic solutions that will both strengthen national security and boost economic growth.

Business Roundtable, an association of CEOs of America's leading companies, believes immigration reform is essential for creating a more healthy U.S. economy.

Overhauling our immigration system will place more resources toward enforcement, produce a more dynamic and skilled labor force, and enable U.S. businesses to compete more effectively in the global marketplace. Reform can help accelerate our economic recovery and, as a result, encourage hiring. Here's how:

Business requires certainty—a predictable environment in which to plan and make investment decisions.

That means the law must be consistently enforced across the country, and legal immigration channels must function properly. Border controls and immigration law enforcement must be strengthened and an employment verification system should ensure that each new worker is legally authorized to live and work here.

The current federal system, E-Verify, has improved significantly in recent years, but is still a work in progress, vulnerable to fraud and identity theft.

The federal government should bear the responsibility for maintaining the database behind this electronic system, making sure it's reliable, accurate and guards against fraud. Employers, then, must

bear the responsibility of checking every new hire in that system.

Looking ahead, all Americans would benefit by welcoming those who would come here legally to work and contribute to our economy.

Today, the visa system prevents many outstanding foreign-born scientists, engineers and other highly educated professionals from working in the United States. Faced with a shortage of temporary high-skilled visas and 6- to 10-year waits for employment-based green cards, foreign graduates of U.S. universities are taking their talents elsewhere. Wouldn't it better to have them working for us rather than for our foreign competitors?

Consider that immigrants or the children of immigrants founded 40 percent of U.S. Fortune 500 companies. Almost 25 percent of engineering and technology companies founded in the United States from 2006 to 2012 had at least one foreign-born founder. Across America, these companies employed about 560,000 workers and generated \$63 billion in sales in 2012.

Sadly, our broken immigration system now deprives the nation of too many young, educated hard-working people who can represent the best of America, our entrepreneurial spirit.

At the same time, no workable legal visa exists for U.S. employers to fill jobs that are essential and do not require a high school degree—like service personnel at hotels, restaurants and in other sectors.

Despite high U.S. unemployment, for a variety of reasons these jobs may go unfilled as small businesses struggle to grow without

By **GREG BROWN**
Business Roundtable

Greg Brown heads Business Roundtable's Select Committee on Immigration. Readers may write him at Business Roundtable, 300 New Jersey Avenue, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20001.



these essential workers. Without practical visa programs, immigrants are, in effect, encouraged to enter the country illegally.

Skeptics often say that all business wants is a steady supply of low-wage workers. Bringing the current 11-million undocumented immigrants into the legal workforce means that current workers no longer will have to compete with undocumented workers willing to accept below-market wages. Ultimately, wages will go up.

Of course, those who came or stayed here in violation of the law must face consequences—admitting their wrongdoing, paying a fine and undergoing a criminal background check. Those who qualify would have the chance to work, learn English and earn their citizenship.

This newly legal workforce will be more mobile, able to move to different regions and jobs as the labor market demands. This new labor dynamism also will add to local economic growth, producing higher wages.

With support from both political parties and the president, realistic solutions for our broken immigration system are within sight—solutions that will improve U.S. competitiveness, add jobs and drive growth. The stronger economy that results will benefit all Americans.

Iraq War and the dangers of gullibility

The nation was awash last week in stories about the 10th anniversary of the start of the Iraq War. It's almost enough to make you nostalgic.

You turn on the tube and there's good old President George W. Bush announcing on the evening of Wednesday, March 19, 2003, that the air war had begun. Shock and awe, baby.

What he didn't say was that earlier that day, he'd been told that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein would be spending the night in a certain bunker in Baghdad. The president ordered up a "decapitation strike."

As the Air Force Magazine later reported, some hot new bombs had just been delivered to Udeid Air Base in Qatar. The EGBU-27 was the latest thing—a ton of high explosive that could be guided by global positioning satellites.

Four of them were fitted onto a pair of F-117 stealth fighters. The pilots took off for Baghdad and two hours later, as dawn was breaking, laid the bombs right on target. The first attack of the Iraq war was a metaphor for the entire thing.

The intelligence had been wrong. Saddam was elsewhere. An untold number of other Iraqis weren't. Say this for the past 10 years: We do decapitation strikes a lot cleaner now.

The war was on. Some 350 miles to the south, U.S. ground troops pushed across a berm in the Kuwaiti desert and began the invasion. Psy-ops sound-trucks played Drowning Pool's "Let the Bodies Hit the Floor" and Guns 'n Roses' "Welcome to the Jungle." Nowadays, when Americans go to war, they take their tunes.

If it seems like only yesterday, there's a reason: The last U.S. troops left Iraq only 15 months ago. But anniversary stories are useless unless there's a larger point to be made. Here it is: We got had,

and some of us were complicit in it.

The war went so sour, so fast and for so long that these days, it's hard to find anyone who'll admit to supporting it. True confession: I did. For a while.

I bought the whole "Saddam has weapons of mass destruction" argument. There may have been people saying, "He's just running a bluff," but if there were, nobody paid any attention to them.

A lot of the neoconservative arguments for war were seductive. They weren't far removed from John F. Kennedy's pledge: "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

Bush threw the word "evil" around a lot, but Saddam earned it. He'd gassed his own people and we'd let it happen. He ran 24-hour-a-day torture chambers. His son, Uday, tortured members of the Iraqi national soccer team for poor play. The Clinton administration had stood by as genocide took place in Rwanda and was slow to respond to Serbian atrocities. I thought it was money-where-your-mouth-is time.

Besides, one of the U.S. kids who went over the berm was mine. I wanted him to think he was involved in a noble cause. I wanted to think it, too.

Because of him, I got all caught up in the G.I. Joe stuff in the early days of the war. I marveled at the sandstorms, ate up the saga of Private Jessica Lynch, thrilled at the "Thunder Runs" into the heart of Baghdad and applauded the toppling of Saddam's statue in Firdos Square.

Then doubts started creeping in. The Pentagon apparently had

By **KEVIN HERRIGAN**
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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skipped any planning for securing the city. Gen. Tommy Franks, the commander, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, didn't think it was a big deal.

The weapons of mass destruction kept turning up missing. Paul Bremer, who was running the country as the U.S. proconsul, didn't seem to have much of a clue. I began to think, you know if we're going to pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, etc., we ought to have a better plan.

Not until Bush canned Rumsfeld after the 2006 midterm elections and brought Gen. David Petraeus back to Iraq did anyone seem have a clue: Pay off the Sunnis, put enough troops on the streets to restore order, give the political process a chance to work and then start looking for the door.

We'd had the best of intentions, but we'd gone into a place we didn't understand without enough troops and with no plans to get out. Nearly 4,500 American troops died and 30,000 more were wounded, hundreds of thousands more bear psychological wounds. The long-term costs of the war will reach into the trillions.

Ten years ago I didn't understand the term "arrogance of power." I do now.

Iraqis are better off without Hussein

By **CATHY HUSSEIN**
Newsday

The many recent retrospectives upon the 10th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq highlight that the war is widely viewed as a disastrous blunder, if not a crime. Past support for it is seen as a cause for repentance. But I was ambivalently pro-war in 2003, and remain unrepentantly ambivalent today.

There is no denying that Saddam Hussein's alleged weapons of mass destruction—the ostensible reason for the invasion—weren't there. It is also fairly clear that the Bush administration disregarded evidence that did not suit its purposes (though the belief that Hussein regime was hiding weapons was shared by many Democrats). And few would disagree that the occupation was badly mismanaged, due in large part to the administration's arrogance and incompetence.

Yet the truth is also that no one knows what kind of world we would be facing today if we had not gone to war. Some, such as President George W. Bush's speechwriter David Frum, have suggested that a Hussein regime left intact in 2003 would have grown far more dangerous due to new wealth from rising oil prices. And, assuming

that the Arab Spring would still have broken out and reached Iraq, the human toll from the ensuing civil and sectarian strife might well have exceeded that of the invasion and its aftermath.

What's more, there's an important group of people that does not see this war as utterly pointless: the Iraqis themselves.

The days when jubilant crowds in Baghdad celebrated Hussein's downfall and greeted American soldiers are long gone. Yet numerous surveys since then have found the Iraqi people more or less evenly split on whether the invasion was right or wrong; in 2009, only 28 percent saw it as "absolutely wrong." (The pool of respondents, it is worth noting, included people who held privileged positions under Saddam Hussein.) In various surveys, as many as three out of four Iraqis agree that Hussein's removal was worth it despite the hardships, with only a quarter preferring the way things were in prewar Iraq.

Iraqis today have freedom of speech, religion and political activity that would have been unthinkable a dozen years ago. Indeed, President Barack Obama has acknowledged these gains despite his long-standing opposition to the war. In his 2010 Oval Office speech on the war's official end, he stated that the American armed forces "defeated a regime that had terrorized its people" and that, despite all the challenges, "Iraq

has the opportunity to embrace a new destiny."

Of course, no sane person would argue that the United States has a mandate to overthrow oppressive regimes everywhere. Nor would anyone claim that the war in Iraq was an unmitigated human rights triumph. Critics of the war have a powerful point when they argue that abuses by U.S. troops have compromised our national moral standing—and such abuses are virtually unavoidable when foreign troops act as an occupying force.

But the left-wing cliché of the war as American slaughter of Iraqis is simply wrong. Nearly 90 percent of the post-invasion Iraqi casualties have been at the hands of fellow Iraqis, in sectarian or insurgent violence, according to an analysis by King's College London. And, whatever the failings of U.S. military justice, Iraqis mistreated by American soldiers had a vastly better chance at protection and redress than Iraqis terrorized by Hussein's henchmen.






History's final verdict on Operation Iraqi Freedom is not in yet. But it is not too early to say that Americans are not the villains in this story. That role belongs to the late dictator who so brutalized his people that millions of them were ready to welcome a foreign invasion—and, later, to the fanatics who unleashed carnage on their own.

Cathy Young is a regular contributor to Reason magazine and the website RealClearPolitics. This was written for Newsday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲ 88 ▼ 79
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 88 ▼ 76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲ 90 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲ 84 ▼ 78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 80
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 80

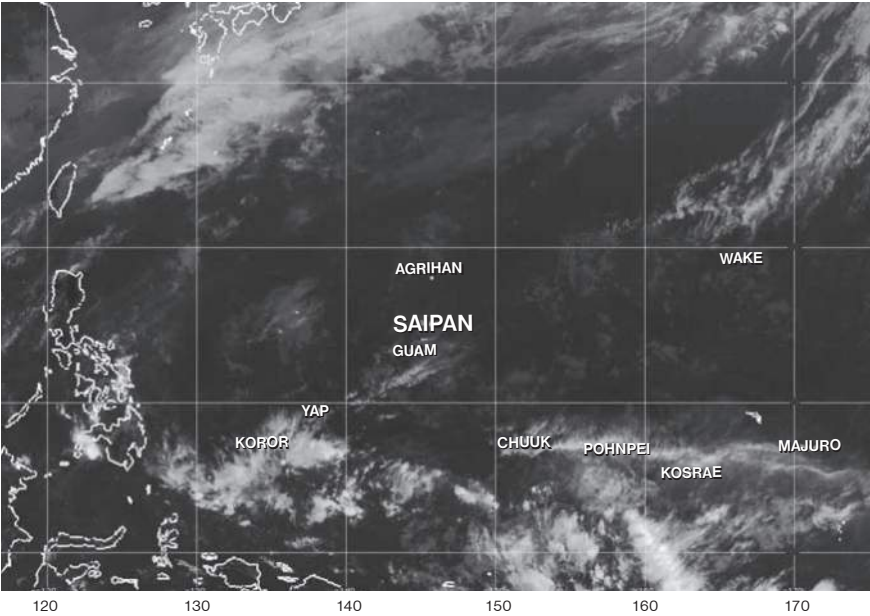
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲ 75 ▼ 61
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲ 56 ▼ 33
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲ 76 ▼ 73
Honolulu	Showers	▲ 77 ▼ 70
London	Partly Cloudy	▲ 38 ▼ 27
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 52
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 91 ▼ 79
Melbourne	Rain	▲ 67 ▼ 50
Miami	Sunny	▲ 71 ▼ 50
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲ 46 ▼ 35
Osaka	Showers	▲ 65 ▼ 51
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 44 ▼ 29
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲ 62 ▼ 43
Rome	Showers	▲ 60 ▼ 53
Salem	Showers	▲ 62 ▼ 45
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 61 ▼ 52
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲ 55 ▼ 33
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 55
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲ 49 ▼ 36

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
3:14 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
9:03 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
3:36 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
9:46 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2013

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front that is transitioning to a shear-line stretches southwestward from east of Two To Island at 25N150E to 16N135E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are seen along and up to 200 miles northwest of the front. A near-equatorial trough well south of Koror and Yap extends southeastward from 3N130E to EQ146E. Scattered showers are found south of a line running from 4N132E to 2N144E north of the trough. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are located southeast of Yap between 6N and 8N from 138E to 143E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found north of the trough axis up to 5N from 140E to 147E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms from southeast of Chuuk and south of Pohnpei to near Kosrae between 1N and 6N from from 153E to 168E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:16 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:15 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Monday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:18 PM	6:30 AM
Friday	8:17 PM	7:18 AM
Saturday	9:18 PM	8:09 AM
Sunday	10:19 PM	9:03 AM
Monday	11:19 PM	10:00 AM

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 8, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 4, 6, 7 UA5062 4:40am 5:30am 1, 3, 5 UA5068 8:25am 9:15am Daily UA5074 11:10am 12:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5076 3:10pm 4:00pm Daily UA5078 6:55pm 7:45pm Daily UA5072 9:45pm 10:35pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA 5069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 4, 6, 7 UA5071 7:05am 7:55am Daily UA5073 9:50am 10:40am 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 UA5075 1:45pm 2:35pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5077 5:35pm 6:25pm Daily UA5079 8:20pm 9:10pm Daily ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5062 3:35am 4:10am 1, 3, 5 UA5038 10:55am 11:30am 6 SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:45am Daily DL285 6:30am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:25pm Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 1, 5 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 8:50pm 2:10am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:00am 8:35am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:30pm 4:30am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU7108 3:50am 7:40am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU7107 7:40pm 2:50am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO) XF1734 11:55am 5:10pm 5	VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN XF1733 8:00pm 12:05am+1 4
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:35am 9:55am 6 via GUM UA5062/191 4:40am 9:55am 3 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:15pm 2, 4, 5, 7 via NRT DL287/173 6:00am 10:35pm 1, 3, 6 via NRT UA5076/183 3:10pm 8:45pm Daily via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN UA5072/PR111 9:45pm 7:45am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily via ICN DL172/288 7:55am 1:15am+1 2, 4, 7 via NRT DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via NRT UA190/5077 10:55am 6:25pm 3, 6 via GUM UA190/5079 10:55am 9:10pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/UA5072 10:15pm 7:55am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 10:55pm 7:55am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 7:55am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5076/147 3:10pm 9:45pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 10:35pm 7:55am+1 1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 1020	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily				
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

USCG, Navy locate Guam vessel in distress

APRA HARBOR, Guam—U.S. Coast Guard and Navy search and rescue crews partnered to search the waters off of Guam for a 25-foot fishing vessel with two persons on-board which departed Merizo early Tuesday morning and failed to return that afternoon.

Coast Guard Sector Guam watchstanders received a call from the Guam Fire Department 911 dispatch center at 9:03pm Tuesday night. The Coast Guard immediately launched a 45-foot response boat from Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor and requested assistance from the U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 to search for the missing vessel.

An SH-60 helicopter from HSC-25 was the first to arrive on-scene and identified a 25-foot vessel 12 nautical miles southwest of Guam with two persons onboard, but was unable to make contact with the vessel. The helicopter vectored the Coast Guard RB-M to the location, and the personnel from the Coast Guard small boat conducted a boarding of the vessel to determine if the personnel were the missing fishermen and if they need assistance.

The mariners indicated they had experienced mechanical difficulties with their engines and radio systems, and due to the distance from shore, their cellular telephones did not receive a signal. The vessel was towed by the response boat and moored safely at Merizo pier at 12:45am Wednesday morning.

Mariners are recommended to have a VHF-FM marine-band radio on board set to channel 16 to signal distress. The Coast Guard's Rescue 21 communications system is capable of receiving distress calls on channel 16 from vessels up to 20 nautical miles offshore. **(USCG)**

Inos appoints Galvin Deleon Guerrero to BOE

Pursuant to Article XV, Section 1(c) of the CNMI Constitution and 1 CMC Section 2261(b), Gov. Eloy S. Inos has appointed Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero to serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Education to represent non-public schools. Deleon Guerrero, a former elected

member of the BOE, will begin serving immediately as his appointment does not require the advice and consent of the Senate.

Inos' appointment comes on the heels of the reorganization of the Coalition of Private Schools in which Deleon Guerrero was recently elected as its new president.

"The Board of Education plays a vital role in ensuring the best education possible for our students," said Inos. "The Lt. Governor and I are confident that Mr. Deleon Guerrero will make valuable contributions and be a strong voice for private schools as he returns to the board in his new capacity."

Deleon Guerrero holds a master's in Catholic School Leadership from the University of San Francisco and was elected in the 2007 elections for a four-year term on the Board of Education. He did not seek re-election in 2012 as he became president of Mount Carmel School in July of that year. **(PR)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TRASH FOR CASH

The Tinian Elementary School's youth basketball team, along with the PTSA, participates in a Trash for Cash event on March 16, 2013, to help raise funds for their trophies and maybe even a banquet for all the students that participated in the health and wellness program.



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM- OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL **RFP13-GOV-088**

Architectural & Engineering Design Services for the Tinian Health Center Repairs, Renovations and Improvements

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider through the Capital Improvement Office, is soliciting sealed proposals for the Architectural and Engineering Design Services for the Repairs Renovation and Improvements of the Tinian Health Center, San Jose Village, Tinian MP, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations dated May 24, 2001. Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with NMHC Section 70-30.3-305.

Prior to being awarded a design contract, the firm or company must have obtained a valid Certificate of Authorization (COA) from the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Board of Professional Licensing.

The Scope of Work (SOW) will be available on March 15, 2013 at the Capital Improvement Office, Office of the Governor. A \$25.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment be presented when obtaining the package. A Pre-Proposal Meeting is scheduled on at the Governor's Office, Capitol Hill, Saipan on March 21, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. at the Governor's Conference Room. The project completion time for this project is 90 calendar days. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Ms. Elizabeth S. Balajadia, P.E., Project Manager at fax no. (670) 664-2408 or via email at balajadiaelizabeth@hotmail.com no later than Thursday, April 4, 2013, 4:30 p.m., local time.

Proposals shall not exceed twenty five (25) pages. Note that a firm or company that submits as a prime consultant cannot submit as a subconsultant on another proposal. However, subconsultants may be included in multiple proposals by different consultants.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualification and Experience on similar projects (25%)
2. Project Approach (25%)
3. Work load and resources to accomplish the work in the required time frame (25%)
4. Past performance with the CNMI Government on similar projects (25%)

Proposals must be sealed and marked by April 15, 2013. For proposals within the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than April 15, 2013. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitted an Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to submit proposal must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 4:30 p.m., April 15, 2013, local time, and maybe submitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via email to procurement@pticom.com. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of the sealed proposals must be marked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal services of the foreign country no later than April 15, 2013 AND must be received no later than April 23, 2013. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

Discussion shall be conducted with at least three (3) of the firms regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three (3) firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required.

A contract shall be negotiated with the highest qualified architect/engineer firm or company at a price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government. If a fair and reasonable price cannot be negotiated with the highest ranking qualified firm, then additional firms may be selected in order of competence and qualifications and negotiations continued until a fair and reasonable price is agreed upon.

The successful proposer(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement and Supply Regulations Section 3-301.

All responses to this RFP shall take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer(s) awarded a contract for this project, including excise tax.

The government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any Proposal in the best interest of the Government. All Proposals shall become the property of the Government.

/s/ ELOY S. INOS, Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Procurement and Supply, DOF



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp



INVITATION FOR BIDS

This ad is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

NMHC IFB 2013-002 **Amendment No. 01**

Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, are hereby giving notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan.

Interested individuals or firms may pick up a copy of the Project Package beginning Friday, March 22, 2013, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office on **Monday, April 1, 2013, at 9:00 a.m.**, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan. Bidders will have the opportunity to tour the housing subdivisions and inspect several housing units owned by NMHC that will be covered under the proposed contract. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be addressed in writing to the NMHC Corporate Director at P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 3, 2013.

Sealed bids must be marked **NMHC-IFB 2013-002**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m.**, local time **Thursday, April 11, 2013**. Bids received after the date and time will not be accepted. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notice of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m.**, local time, **Thursday, April 11, 2013**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **Thursday, April 11, 2013**, and must be received at Procurement and Supply no later than **Thursday, April 18, 2013**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan at **10:30 a.m.**, local time, **Friday, April 19, 2013**. However, if no notice of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m.**, local time on Thursday, April 11, 2013.

All labor on this project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of \$5.55 per hour which took effect on October 1, 2012 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of \$.50 per hour as announced by the U.S. Department of Labor and/or the CNMI Department of Labor, whichever is higher.

NMHC hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that, in any contacts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, small, minority businesses and women's business enterprises will be afforded equal opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, disabilities or national origin.

This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires the successful bidder to the "maximum extent feasible", take affirmative steps to provide training, contracting and employment opportunities and help ensure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents in Saipan.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC.

NMHC reserves the right to reject any and all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in the bids if determined to be in its best interest. All bids received shall become the property of the Commonwealth Government.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLON
Director, Procurement & Supply

Business

Study: Health overhaul to raise claims cost 32 pct.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Insurance companies will have to pay out an average of 32 percent more for medical claims on individual health policies under President Barack Obama's overhaul, the nation's leading group of financial risk analysts has estimated.

That's likely to increase premiums for at least some Americans buying individual plans.

The report by the Society of Actuaries could turn into a big headache for the Obama administration at a time when many parts of the country remain skeptical about the Affordable Care Act.

While some states will see medical claims costs per person decline, the report concluded the overwhelming majority will see double-digit increases in their individual health insurance markets, where people purchase coverage directly from insurers.

The disparities are striking. By 2017, the estimated increase would be 62 percent for California, about 80 percent for Ohio, more than 20 percent for Florida and 67 percent for Maryland. Much of the reason for the higher claims costs is that sicker people are expected to join the pool, the report said.

The report did not make similar estimates for employer plans, the mainstay for workers and their families. That's because the primary impact of Obama's law is on people who don't have coverage through their jobs.

The administration questions the design of the study, saying it focused only on one piece of the puzzle and ignored cost re-



In this March 19, 2013 photo, LaTonya Jenkins stands outside the homeless shelter where she lives in Kansas City, Mo. Missouri's refusal to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act has Jenkins and others concerned that they will lose healthcare benefits.

lief strategies in the law such as tax credits to help people afford premiums and special payments to insurers who attract an outsize share of the sick. The study also doesn't take into account the potential price-cutting effect of competition in new state insurance markets that will go live on Oct. 1, administration officials said.

At a White House briefing on Tuesday, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said some of what passes for health insurance today is so skimpy it can't be compared to the comprehensive coverage available under the law. "Some

of these folks have very high catastrophic plans that don't pay for anything unless you get hit by a bus," she said. "They're really mortgage protection, not health insurance."

A prominent national expert, recently retired Medicare chief actuary Rick Foster, said the report does "a credible job" of estimating potential enrollment and costs under the law, "without trying to tilt the answers in any particular direction."

"Having said that," Foster added, "actuaries tend to be financially conservative, so the various assumptions might be more inclined to consider what

might go wrong than to anticipate that everything will work beautifully." Actuaries use statistics and economic theory to make long-range cost projections for insurance and pension programs sponsored by businesses and government. The society is headquartered near Chicago.

Kristi Bohn, an actuary who worked on the study, acknowledged it did not attempt to estimate the effect of subsidies, insurer competition and other factors that could mitigate cost increases. She said the goal was to look at the underlying cost of medical care.

"Claims cost is the most important driver of health care premiums," she said.

"We don't see ourselves as a political organization," Bohn added. "We are trying to figure out what the situation at hand is."

On the plus side, the report found the law will cover more than 32 million currently un-

insured Americans when fully phased in. And some states—including New York and Massachusetts—will see double-digit declines in costs for claims in the individual market.

Uncertainty over costs has been a major issue since the law passed three years ago, and remains so just months before a big push to cover the uninsured gets rolling Oct. 1. Middle-class households will be able to purchase subsidized private insurance in new marketplaces, while low-income people will be steered to Medicaid and other safety net programs. States are free to accept or reject a Medicaid expansion also offered under the law.

Obama has promised that the new law will bring costs down. That seems a stretch now. While the nation has been enjoying a lull in health care inflation the past few years, even some former administration advisers say a new round of cost-curbing legislation will be needed.

Cyprus businesses hurt as banks stay shut

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP)—Cypriot businesses were under increasing strain to keep running on Tuesday after financial authorities stretched the country's bank closure into a second week in a harried attempt to stop depositors from rushing to drain their accounts.

Cyprus's Central Bank governor, Panicos Demetriades, said "superhuman efforts are being made" to open banks on Thursday.

"Temporary" restrictions will be imposed on financial transactions once the banks do open, he said, but he would not specify what they would be or how long they would be in place.

"We have to restore the public's trust in banks," he said.

Finance Minister Michalis Sarris told The Associated Press the restrictions would help stem any mass deposit withdrawal that is "bound to

happen" and that they would be removed in a "relatively short period of time."

"I think every day (banks) are not open creates more uncertainty and more difficulties for people, so we would like to do our utmost to make sure that this new goal that we have set will work," he said.

All but two of the country's largest lenders had been due to reopen Tuesday, after being shut since March 16 to stop savers from withdrawing all their money while politicians figured out how to raise the funds necessary for Cyprus to qualify for an international bailout.

However, late Monday, authorities announced that the bank closures would be extended until Thursday, giving officials more time to initiate a major overhaul of the banking sector and devise capital controls to limit the amount

of money that can be taken out of accounts.

"We have to all understand that we live in very critical times. Officials of the government and the Central Bank are working day and night," Demetriades said.

Under the deal for a 10 billion euro (\$12.9 billion) rescue clinched in Brussels early Monday, Cyprus agreed to slash its oversized banking sector and inflict hefty losses on large depositors in troubled banks. Sarris said authorities hope to limit job losses to a "small number."

"We are looking to a much smaller banking system over time and more concentrated on its core business, which is Cyprus and the international business units in Cyprus," he said.

Cyprus needed to raise 5.8 billion euros before international lenders were willing to give it the 10 billion euros.

Wal-Mart tests in-store lockers for online orders

SAN BRUNO, Calif. (AP)—Wal-Mart Stores Inc. will be testing this summer an option for consumers to be able to order product on its website and then have it kept in a physical locker at the store so they can pick it up without having to wait in line or talk to a store clerk.

The test, which will be conducted in about a dozen stores in an undisclosed market, is part of the world's largest retailer's overall strategy to offer increasingly demanding web-savvy shoppers the ability to shop any way they want. The company is also expanding its offerings online and improving a new "scan and go" shopping app so customers can immediately download coupons personalized to them.

Officials disclosed the moves Tuesday at a media event at its company's global e-commerce offices in San Bruno, Calif., located in Silicon Valley.

The six-story offices, which house more than 1,000 employ-

ees ranging from engineers to merchandisers, includes (at) WalmartLabs, where many of the shopping innovations are coming from. It was formerly a webs analytics company called Kosmix which the discounter purchased in 2011 and then renamed (at)WalmartLabs.

The offices are different from the staid, sprawling corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Ark. Clearly, it looks like an Internet startup. On the floor housing employees at (at)WalmartLabs, some workers are playing ping pong and pool. On another floor, web analysts watch oversized screens of Walmart.com and Samsclub.com to track any technology problems with the site.

The company conducts so-called "hack days" twice a year where most of the staff are allowed to pursue prototypes of their own liking. At the end of the day, they must show their work.

"We are tenacious about

building the best-in-class e-commerce. We're developing a density of talent that understands competition at Internet speed," said Neil Ashe, who joined the discounter as president and CEO of the company's global e-commerce division in January 2012. He had been president of CBS Interactive where he oversaw such online properties as cbs.com and CNET.com.

Wal-Mart used the one-day event to showcase how the discounter is meeting the challenges to fight off online rivals like eBay Inc. and amazon.com, which have been luring shoppers to the Web with their vast offerings of products and low prices. But the discounter is also following its own customers. More than half of its shoppers have smartphones and one third of its online traffic now comes from smartphones. For the holiday shopping season, that percentage figure was up to 40 percent.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

T-Mobile to start selling iPhones on April 12

NEW YORK (AP)—T-Mobile USA on Tuesday said it will start offering the iPhone on April 12, filling what its CEO said was "a huge void" in its phone lineup. T-Mobile, the fourth-largest of the national U.S. phone companies, has been losing customers to the bigger companies, which all sell the iPhone. "This is a big deal for us," T-Mobile CEO John Legere said at an event in New York. The company will charge \$100 up front for the iPhone 5, then another \$20 per

month for two years. That's on top of service fees for voice, text and data that start at \$50 per month. The total monthly cost starts at \$70 per month, a substantial discount to prices offered by bigger companies.

Supervalu eliminating about 1,100 positions

NEW YORK (AP)—Supervalu is eliminating about 1,100 positions nationwide, or about 3 percent of its workforce, less than a week after the supermarket operator completed the sale of five of its grocery chains. The company said Tuesday that

sale of the five grocery chains means that the remaining business will need "significantly fewer" corporate and store support roles and functions. Supervalu has struggled for years to turn around its business. The broader supermarket industry has been facing growing competition from big-box retailers such as Target, drugstore chains and dollar stores. While bigger chains such as Kroger Co. have adapted by tweaking store formats and improving discount programs and product offerings, Supervalu has scrambled to keep pace.

Nation

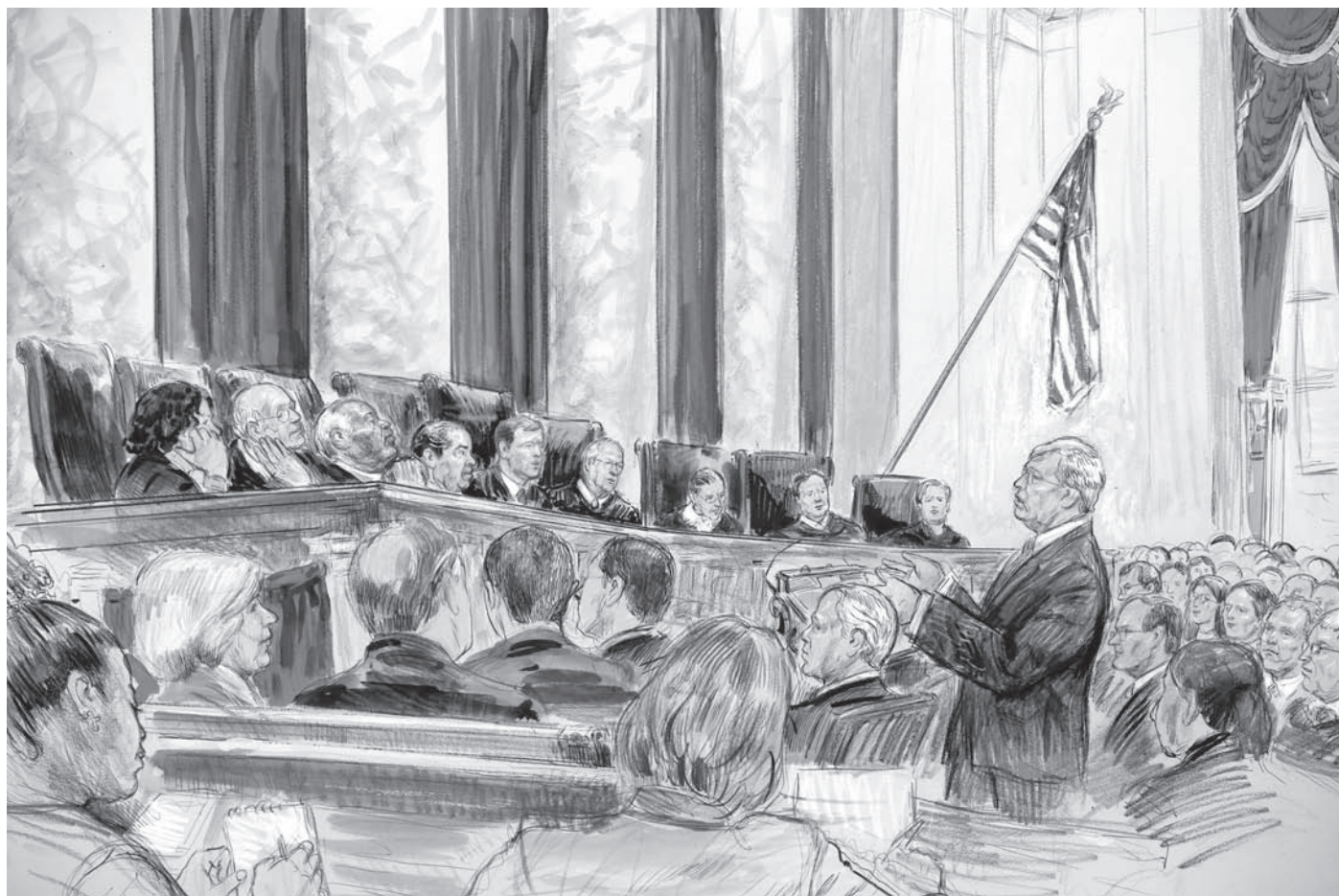
Court might sidestep major ruling on gay marriage

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court dove into a historic debate on gay rights Tuesday that could soon lead to resumption of same-sex marriage in California, but the justices signaled they may not be ready for a major national ruling on whether America's gays and lesbians have a right to marry.

The court's first major examination of gay rights in 10 years continues Wednesday, when the justices will consider the federal law that prevents legally married gay couples from receiving a range of benefits afforded straight married people.

The issue before the court on Tuesday was more fundamental: Does the Constitution require that people be allowed to marry whom they choose, regardless of either partner's gender? The fact that the question was in front of the Supreme Court at all was startling, given that no state recognized same-sex unions before 2003 and 40 states still don't allow them.

There is no questioning the emotions the issue stirs. Demonstrators on both sides crowd-



This artist rendering shows Attorney Theodore Olsen, right, representing the same-sex couples, addresses the Supreme Court in Washington, Tuesday, March 26, 2013, as the court heard arguments on California's ban on same-sex marriage.

the challenge to California's Proposition 8, the state's voter-approved gay marriage ban.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, the potentially decisive vote on a closely divided court, suggested the justices could dismiss the case with no ruling at all.

Such an outcome would almost certainly allow gay marriages to resume in California but would have no impact elsewhere.

There was no majority apparent for any particular outcome, and many doubts were expressed by justices about the arguments advanced by lawyers for the opponents of gay marriage in California, by the supporters and by the Obama administration, which is in favor of same-sex marriage rights. The administration's entry into the case followed President Barack Obama's declaration of support for gay marriage.

On the one hand, Kennedy acknowledged the recentness of same-sex unions, a point stressed repeatedly by Charles Cooper, the lawyer for the defenders of Proposition 8. Cooper said the court should uphold the ban as a valid expression of the people's will and let the vigorous political debate over gay marriage continue.

But Kennedy pressed him also to address the interests of the estimated 40,000 children in California who have same-sex parents.

"They want their parents to have full recognition and full status. The voice of those children is important in this case, don't you think?" Kennedy said.

\$338M lottery winner feels 'pure joy,' uncertainty

LAWRENCEVILLE, N.J. (AP)—A New Jersey man feels "pure joy" at winning a \$338 million Powerball jackpot but has no idea what he will do with the money—except buy a car, to replace his feet as his primary mode of transportation, he said.

Dominican immigrant Pedro Quezada, 45, and his wife, Ines, appeared at New Jersey lottery headquarters Tuesday to officially claim the prize. Both came in jeans, accompanied by four of his eight siblings and two nephews.

The former bodega owner-operator, who came to the United States from the city of Jarab-

coa 26 years ago, said his mind is not clear enough yet to figure out how he will use the money or where he might live.

He did say he could use a good car. Asked what kind of car he has now, he said, "My feet."



Quezada

Lottery officials said Quezada had decided to accept the winnings in the form of a lump-sum payment worth \$221 million, or about \$152 million after taxes. It's the fourth-largest jackpot in Powerball history.

He showed up Monday afternoon at the liquor store in Passaic where he purchased the ticket, not knowing if he held the winner. The ticket was validated at 4:17 p.m., giv-

ing him less than 24 hours to weigh his future as a multimillionaire before appearing at the news conference.

He was asked questions in Spanish and English and answered all the questions in Spanish, with a translator standing next to him. He was peppered with questions about he would spend the money.

"It has to change," he said when asked about how his life would be different now. "Imagine ... so much money. But it will not change my heart."

He said he would share his winnings with family members and would use some to help his community, though he didn't yet know how. He said his wife of nine years, Ines Sanchez, could have "whatever she wants."

ed the grounds outside the court, waving signs, sometimes chanting their feelings.

Inside, a skeptical Justice Samuel Alito cautioned against a broad ruling in favor of gay marriage precisely because the issue is so new.

"You want us to step in and render a decision based on an assessment of the effects of this

institution which is newer than cellphones or the Internet? I mean, we do not have the ability to see the future," Alito said.

Indeed, it was clear from the start of the 80-minute argument in a packed courtroom, that the justices, including some liberals who seemed open to gay marriage, had doubts about whether they should even be hearing

Obama gives Secret Service its 1st female director

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama on Tuesday named veteran Secret Service agent Julia Pierson as the agency's first female director, signaling his desire to change the culture at the male-dominated service, which has been marred by scandal.

Pierson, who most recently served as the agency's chief of staff, will take over from Mark Sullivan, who announced

vice demonstrate every day," Obama said in a statement announcing Pierson's appointment, which does not require Senate confirmation.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano also praised Obama's "historic decision" to name Pierson as the service's first female director.

Pierson, 53, has held high-ranking posts throughout the Secret Service, including deputy assistant director of the office of protective operations and assistant director of human resources and training. She has served as chief of staff since 2008.

That same year, Pierson was awarded the Presidential Meritorious Executive Award for superior performance in management throughout her career.

She joined the Secret Service in 1983 as a special agent and previously worked as a police officer in Orlando, Fla.

"Julia is eminently qualified to lead the agency that not only safeguards Americans at major events and secures our financial

system, but also protects our leaders and our first families, including my own," Obama said. "Julia has had an exemplary career, and I know these experiences will guide her as she takes on this new challenge to lead the impressive men and women of this important agency."

Thirteen Secret Service employees were caught up in last year's prostitution scandal. After a night of heavy partying in the Caribbean resort city of Cartagena, the employees brought women, including prostitutes, to the hotel where they were staying. The incident became public after one agent refused to pay a prostitute and the pair argued about payment in a hotel hallway.

Eight of the employees were forced out of the agency, three were cleared of serious misconduct and at least two have been fighting to get their jobs back.

The incident took place before Obama arrived in Colombia and the service said the president's safety was never compromised. But news of the scandal broke during his trip, overshadowing the summit and embarrassing the U.S. delegation.



Pierson

Report: Big Okla. quake in 2011 likely man-made

WASHINGTON (AP)—An unusual and widely felt 5.6-magnitude quake in Oklahoma in 2011 was probably caused when oil drilling waste was pushed deep underground, a team of university and federal scientists concluded.

That would make it the most powerful quake to be blamed on deep injections of wastewater, according to a study published Tuesday by the journal *Geology*. The waste was from traditional drilling, not from the hydraulic fracturing technique, or fracking.

Not everyone agrees, though, with the scientists' conclusion:

Oklahoma's state seismologists say the quake was natural. The Nov. 6 earthquake near Prague, Okla., injured two people, damaged 14 houses and was felt for hundreds of miles in 14 states, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It was the largest quake in the central part of the country in decades and largest in Oklahoma records, experts said.

The study by geophysicists at the University of Oklahoma, Columbia University and the USGS says that a day earlier there was a slightly smaller quake in an old oil well used to get rid of wastewater, right

along a fault line. That smaller quake triggered the bigger one, and a third smaller aftershock.

The location of the tremors right at the spot where wastewater was stored, combined with an increased well pressure, makes a strong case that the injections resulted in the larger quake, they said.

This area of Oklahoma had been the site of oil drilling going back to the 1950s, and wastewater has been pumped into disposal wells there since 1993, the study authors said. Water and other fluids used for drilling are often pumped more than a mile below ground.

Asia

NKorea puts artillery forces at top combat posture

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea's military warned Tuesday that its artillery and rocket forces are at their highest-level combat posture in the latest in a string of bellicose threats aimed at South Korea and the United States.

The announcement came as South Koreans marked the third anniversary of the sinking of a warship in which 46 South Korean sailors died. Seoul says the ship was hit by a North Korean torpedo, while the North denies involvement.

Seoul's Defense Ministry said Tuesday it hasn't seen any suspicious North Korean military activity and that officials are analyzing the North's warning. Analysts say a direct North Korean attack is extremely unlikely, especially during joint U.S.-South Korean military drills that end April 30, though there's some worry about a provocation after the training wraps up.

The rival Koreas have had several bloody naval skirmishes in disputed Yellow Sea waters since 1999. In November 2010, a North Korean artillery strike on a South Korean island killed

two marines and two civilians.

North Korea, angry over routine U.S.-South Korean drills and recent U.N. sanctions punishing it for its Feb. 12 nuclear test, has vowed to launch a nuclear strike against the United States and repeated its nearly two-decade-old threat to reduce Seoul to a "sea of fire." Despite the rhetoric, outside weapons analysts have seen no proof that North Korea has mastered the technology needed to build a warhead small enough to mount on a missile. On Tuesday, the North Korean army's Supreme Command said it will take "practical military action" to protect national sovereignty and its leadership in response to what it called U.S. and South Korean plots to attack.

The statement, carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency, cited the participation of nuclear-capable B-52 bombers in South Korea-U.S. drills.

North Korea's field artillery forces—including strategic rocket and long-range artillery units that are "assigned to strike bases of the U.S. imperialist ag-

gressor troops in the U.S. mainland and on Hawaii and Guam and other operational zones in the Pacific as well as all the enemy targets in South Korea and its vicinity"—will be placed on "the highest alert from this moment," the statement said.

Pentagon press secretary George Little said the threat would only further isolate North Korea.

"North Korea's bellicose rhetoric and threats follow a well-worn pattern designed to raise tensions and intimidate others," Little said. He said there have been three flights by U.S. B-52 bombers during the recent military drills with South Korea.

The North's recent threats are seen partly as efforts to strengthen internal loyalty to young leader Kim Jong Un and to build up his military credentials.

Kim "needs to show he has the guts. The best way to do that is to use the military might that he commands," said Lee Yoon-gyu, a North Korea expert at Korea National Defense University in Seoul. "This paves the way for greater praise for him if North Korea makes a provocation later and claims victory."

Activists fear Thai return of Hmong rebel to Laos

BANGKOK (AP)—A U.S. admonition to Laos over its shaky human rights record spurred efforts Tuesday to halt the possible deportation from Thailand of a former ethnic leader to the authoritarian Southeast Asian nation.

Rights activists said former ethnic Hmong rebel leader Moua Toua Ter is being held at an immigration detention center in Bangkok, while they and at least one Western embassy made representations on his behalf to the Thai government. They fear he faces severe persecution if returned to his homeland.

Concern over his fate came after the United States took Laos to task for failing to account for the disappearance of a prominent social activist.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Laos' failure to provide significant information about the case of award-winning activist Sombath Somphone is raising questions about the government's commitment to the rule of law and engaging

responsibly with the world—withstanding its recent accession to the World Trade Organization.

"Mr. Sombath's disappearance resurrects memories of an earlier era when unexplained disappearances were common," Kerry said in a statement timed for the 100-day anniversary of the activist's disappearance Monday.

Laos has been under a communist government since 1975. It has opened up considerably in the past two decades and been willing to build ties with the U.S., which bombed it heavily during the war in neighboring Vietnam. But it retains a one-party political system and is intolerant of dissent.

Sombath was last seen in closed-circuit video footage when he was stopped at a police checkpoint in the capital Vientiane on Dec. 15, but the Lao government denies knowledge of his fate. His work in social development was not overtly political, although the communist authorities may feel

threatened by the nation's nascent civil society. Dozens of international nongovernment groups, the U.N. human rights office and the European Union have voiced deep concern over the case.

Other disappearances and killings in Laos have gone unsolved. Last week, the State Department said local authorities had obstructed its attempt to probe the disappearances of three Laotian-Americans from Minnesota who went missing in southern Laos in January.

State Department officials say the U.S. is monitoring the case of Moua Toua Ter, who fought with CIA-backed Hmong guerrillas in Laos against communists during the Vietnam War. When the communists took power in 1975, he was a leader in a rag-tag Hmong resistance holed up in remote jungles of northern Laos that was only reached by journalists in 2003 who found a pitiful settlement of starving civilians and ill-equipped fighters.

bombers, and were followed by a ceremonial visit Tuesday to James Shoal farther south.

Boat capsizes in southern Philippines, 10 dead

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—An official says 10 people have drowned and two are missing in the southern Philippines after their canoe capsized in a marsh during strong winds. Mayor Allandatu Angas says the canoe overturned late Monday in the Liguasan Marsh, a remote swamp region in Maguindanao province, about 900 kilometers (560 miles) south of Manila. Angas, the mayor of Sultan sa Barongis town, said 10 bodies were recovered Tuesday, including two children. All of the dead and missing were related.

World

Knox saga still not over for Italian courts

ROME (AP)—It's not over yet for Amanda Knox.

Italy's top criminal court dealt a stunning setback Tuesday to the 25-year-old college student, overturning her acquittal in the grisly murder of her British roommate and ordering her to stand trial again.

"She thought that the nightmare was over," Knox's attorney, Carlo Dalla Vedova, told reporters minutes after conveying the unexpected turn of events to his client, who had stayed up to hear the ruling, which came shortly after 2 a.m. West Coast time. "But she's ready to fight."

Now a student at the University of Washington in Seattle, Knox called the decision by the Rome-based Court of Cassation "painful" but said she was confident that she would be exonerated.

The American left Italy a free woman after her October 2011 acquittal—but only after serving nearly four years of a

26-year prison sentence from a lower court that convicted her of murdering Meredith Kercher. The 21-year-old exchange student's body was found in a pool of blood, her throat slit, in a bedroom of the house the two shared in Perugia, a university town 100 miles north of Rome.



Knox

Raffaele Sollecito, Knox's Italian boyfriend at the time, was also convicted of the Nov. 1, 2007, murder, then later acquitted. His acquittal was also thrown out Tuesday and a new trial ordered.

Italian law cannot compel Knox to return for the new trial and Dalla Vedova said she had no plans to do so.

In any case, the judicial saga is likely to continue for years. It will be months before a date

is set for the new trial, to be held in Florence instead of Perugia because the small town has only one appellate court, which already acquitted her.

Prosecution and defense teams must also await details of the ruling explaining why the high court concluded there were procedural errors in the trial that acquitted Knox and Sollecito. The court has 90 days to issue its explanation.

Another Knox defender, Luciano Ghirga, said she was gearing up psychologically for her third trial. Ghirga said he told Knox: "You have always been our strength. We rose up again after the first-level convictions. We'll have the same resoluteness, the same energy" in the new trial.

Still, it was a tough blow for the former exchange student, whose parents mortgaged both their homes to raise funds for her lengthy, expensive defense.

Syrian opposition takes Syria's Arab summit seat

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—Syria's opposition took over the country's seat for the first time at an Arab summit Tuesday in a diplomatic triumph marred by severe divisions in the ranks of the Western-backed opposition alliance.

The opposition's ascension to representing the country at the summit in Qatar, a key backer of the those fighting to topple President Bashar Assad, demonstrated the extent of the regime's isolation two years into a ferocious civil war that the U.N. says has killed an estimated 70,000 people.

In Damascus, the government on Tuesday blasted the Arab League's decision, portraying it as a selling-out of Arab identity to please Israel and the United States. "The shameful decisions it (Arab

League) has taken against the Syrian people since the beginning of the crisis and until now have sustained our conviction that it has exchanged its Arab identity with a Zionist-American one," said an editorial in the Al-Thawra newspaper, a government mouthpiece.

The Qatari ruler, who chaired the summit, said the Syrian opposition deserves "this representation because of the popular legitimacy they have won at home and the broad support they won abroad and the historic role they have assumed in leading the revolution and preparing for building the new Syria."

In a further show of solidarity with anti-Assad forces, the Arab League endorsed the "right of each state" to provide the Syrian people and the Free Syrian

Army with "all necessary means to ... defend themselves, including military means."

It was unclear whether the statement would open new weapons channels to fighters. But it would mark a symbolic slap of the U.S. and European allies that have resisted full-scale military aid to the rebels.

Arab League Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby told reporters that the call for "rights" to aid rebels is not an end to diplomatic efforts to solve Syria's crisis, but seeks to provide more "balance" with Assad's superior firepower and aid he is getting from Russia and Iran.

"The right to send more weapons to support the opposition is not an end to political efforts, but this might establish balance between both parties," Elaraby said.

In Russia, teen complains of adoptive US parents

MOSCOW (AP)—A teenager adopted by an American couple has returned to Russia, claiming that his adoptive family treated him badly and that he lived on the streets of Philadelphia and stole just to survive, Russian state media reported.

The allegations by Alexander Abnosov, who was adopted around five years ago and is now 18, will likely fuel outrage here over the fate of Russian children adopted by Americans. It's an anger that the Kremlin has carefully stoked in recent months to justify its controversial ban on U.S. adoptions.

Russia's Channel 1 and Rossiya television—which are both state controlled—reported Tuesday that Abnosov returned from a Philadelphia suburb to the Volga river city of Cheboksary, where his 72-year-old

grandmother lives.

Russian media identified the teen as Alexander Abnosov, but also show him displaying a U.S. passport that gives his name as Joshua Alexander Salotti.

Abnosov, who spoke in a soft voice and appeared somewhat restrained, complained to Rossiya that his adoptive mother was "nagging at small things."

"She would make any small problem big," he said on Channel 1. He also told Channel 1 that he fled home because of the conflicts with his adoptive mother, staying on the streets for about three months and stealing.

"I was stealing stuff and sold them to get some food," he said with a shy smile.

According to the daily Kommolskaya Pravda, Abnosov says that his parents visited him while he stayed in a shelter

in Philadelphia, but that they didn't ask him to come home as he'd expected. Channel 1 said his adoptive father gave him \$500 to buy a ticket to Russia, though it wasn't clear when he arrived here.

The newspaper said it reached Abnosov's adoptive mother, who denied driving him away. She was quoted as saying he was asked to come home, but said he wanted to return to Russia where he has relatives to care for.

The teen's adoptive parents—identified in the media reports as Steve and Jackie Salotti—could not immediately be reached Tuesday.

A woman who identified herself as a relative at the couple's home in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, said the parents weren't there and did not want to discuss the case.



ASIAN BRIEFS

China holds landing exercises in South China Sea

BEIJING (AP)—China says its navy visited its southernmost territorial claim during military drills in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. The visit to James Shoal followed exercises that began Saturday marking a high-profile show of China's determination to stake its claim to territory in an area that is disputed by Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei. The official People's Daily online said Wednesday that one destroyer, two frigates and an amphibious landing ship took part in the drills around Chinese-controlled outcroppings. They involved hovercraft, ship-born helicopters, amphibious tanks, and land-based fighters and

Focus

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) - If history is any judge, the U.S. government will be paying for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars for the next century as service members and their families grapple with the sacrifices of combat.

An Associated Press analysis of federal payment records found that the government is still making monthly payments to relatives of Civil War veterans - 148 years after the conflict ended.

At the 10 year anniversary of the start of the Iraq war, more than \$40 billion a year are going to compensate veterans and survivors from the Spanish-American War from 1898, World War I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the two Iraq campaigns and the Afghanistan conflict. And those costs are rising rapidly.

U.S. Sen. Patty Murray said such expenses should remind the nation about war's long-lasting financial toll.

"When we decide to go to war, we have to consciously be also thinking about the cost," said Murray, D-Wash., adding that her WWII-veteran father's disability benefits helped feed their family.

Alan Simpson, a former Republican senator and veteran who co-chaired President Barack Obama's deficit committee in 2010, said government leaders working to limit the national debt should make sure that survivors of veterans need the money they are receiving.

"Without question, I would affluence-test all of those people," Simpson said.

With greater numbers of



Juanita Tudor Lowrey, age 86, poses with a photo of her father, Civil War veteran Hugh Tudor Tuesday, March 19, 2013, in Kearney, Mo. Lowrey received pension benefits related to her father's Civil War service until she was 18 after her father died when she was 2 years old.

AP: Costs of US wars linger for over 100 years

MIKE BAKER
Associated Press

troops surviving combat injuries because of improvements in battlefield medicine and technology, the costs of disability payments are set to rise much higher.

The AP identified the disability and survivor benefits during an analysis of millions of federal payment records obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

To gauge the post-war costs of each conflict, AP looked at four compensation programs that identify recipients by war: disabled veterans; survivors of those who died on active duty or from a service-related disability; low-income wartime vets over age 65 or disabled; and low-income survivors of wartime veterans or their disabled children.

■ The Iraq wars and Afghanistan

So far, the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the first Persian Gulf conflict in the early 1990s are costing about \$12 billion a year to compensate those who have left military service or family members of those who have died.

Those post-service compensation costs have totaled more than \$50 billion since 2003, not including expenses of medical care and other benefits provided to veterans, and are poised to grow for many years to come.

The new veterans are filing for disabilities at historic rates, with about 45 percent of those from Iraq and Afghanistan seeking compensation

for injuries. Many are seeking compensation for a variety of ailments at once.

Experts see a variety of factors driving that surge, including a bad economy that's led more jobless veterans to seek the financial benefits they've earned, troops who survive wounds of war and more awareness about head trauma and mental health.

■ Vietnam War

It's been 40 years since the U.S. ended its involvement in the Vietnam War, and yet payments for the conflict are still rising.

Now above \$22 billion annually, Vietnam compensation costs are roughly twice the size of the FBI's annual budget. And while many disabled Vietnam vets have been compensated for post-traumatic stress disorder,

hearing loss or general wounds, other ailments are positioning the war to have large costs even after veterans die.

Based on an uncertain link to the defoliant Agent Orange that was used in Vietnam, federal officials approved diabetes a decade ago as an ailment that qualifies for cash compensation - and it is now the most compensated ailment for Vietnam vets.

The VA also recently included heart disease among the Vietnam medical issues that qualify, and the agency is seeing thousands of new claims for that issue. Simpson said he has a lot of concerns about the government agreeing to automatically compensate for those diseases.

"That has been terribly abused," Simpson said.

Since heart disease is com-

mon among older Americans and is the nation's leading cause of death, the future deaths of thousands of Vietnam veterans could be linked to their service and their benefits passed along to survivors.

A congressional analysis estimated the cost of fighting the war was \$738 billion in 2011 dollars, and the post-war benefits for veterans and families have separately cost some \$270 billion since 1970, according to AP calculations.

■ World War I, World War II and the Korean War

World War I, which ended 94 years ago, continues to cost taxpayers about \$20 million every year. World War II? \$5 billion.

Compensation for WWII veterans and families didn't peak

until 1991 - 46 years after the war ended - and annual costs since then have only declined by about 25 percent. Korean War costs appear to be leveling off at about \$2.8 billion per year.

Of the 2,289 survivors drawing cash linked to WWI, about one-third are spouses and dozens of them are over 100 years in age.

Some of the other recipients are curious: Forty-seven of the spouses are under the age of 80, meaning they weren't born until years after the war ended. Many of those women were in their 20s and 30s when their aging spouses died in the 1960s and 1970s, and they've been drawing the monthly payments since.

-Civil War and Spanish-American War

There are 10 living recipients of benefits tied to the 1898 Spanish-American War at a total cost of about \$50,000 per year. The Civil War payments are going to two children of veterans - one in North Carolina and one in Tennessee- each for \$876 per year.

Surviving spouses can qualify for lifetime benefits when troops from current wars have a service-linked death. Children under the age of 18 can also qualify, and those benefits are extended for a lifetime if the person is permanently incapable of self-support due to a disability before the age of 18.

Citing privacy, officials did not disclose the names of the two children getting the Civil War benefits.

Their ages suggest the one in Tennessee was born around 1920 and the North Carolina survivor was born around 1930. A veteran who was young during the Civil War would likely have been roughly 70 or 80 years old when the two people were born.

That's not unheard of. At age 86, Juanita Tudor Lowrey is the daughter of a Civil War veteran. Her father, Hugh Tudor, fought in the Union army. After his first wife died, Tudor was 73 when he remarried her 33-year-old mother in 1920. Lowrey was born in 1926.

Lowrey, who lives in Kearney, Mo., suspects the marriage might have been one of convenience, with her father looking for a housekeeper and her mother looking for some security. He died a couple years after she was born, and Lowrey received pension benefits until she was 18.

Now, Lowrey said, she usually gets skepticism from people after she tells them she's a daughter of a Civil War veteran.

"We're few and far between," Lowrey said.

Environment

Secure pesticides and chemicals during Poison Prevention Week

»More than 145,000 reports made each year to poison centers involving pesticides and disinfectants

ON THE NET

- Poison prevention tips and resources to protect your family: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/poisonprevention.htm>
- Room by room checklist for potential poisoning hazards: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/roombyroom-checklist.htm>
- List of rat and mouse products that meet the EPA's safety standards: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/mice-and-rats/rodent-bait-station.html>
- More on National Poison Prevention Week: <http://www.poisonprevention.org/index.htm>

WASHINGTON—During National Poison Prevention Week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency urges parents and caregivers to secure pesticides and other household chemicals in locked cabinets out of children's reach.

"Poison Prevention Week is a time to raise awareness and strengthen prevention efforts to empower parents and caregivers with information about simple steps that can be taken to prevent poisonings," said James Jones, acting assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. "EPA continues to take action to help prevent these risks to children and help ensure that the products on the market are both safe and effective for consumers. Our recent move to ban the sale of 12 D-Con mouse and rat poison products produced by Reckitt Benckiser Inc is a prime example of our commitment."

Each year, approximately 65,000 children

ages 5 and younger are accidentally exposed to pesticides, and more than 10,000 of those exposures involve mouse and rat poisons. Recently, EPA took steps that, with the help of Americans who use these products around their homes, could help lower these statistics. Under new EPA safety standards,

consumer use mouse and rat poison products must include a protective tamper-resistant bait station. These measures prevent children from accessing the poison.

More than 90 percent of poisonings happen in people's homes. Parents and caregivers can protect children and loved ones against pesticide exposure.

Poisonings are preventable. Here are some simple tips to prepare and stay safe:

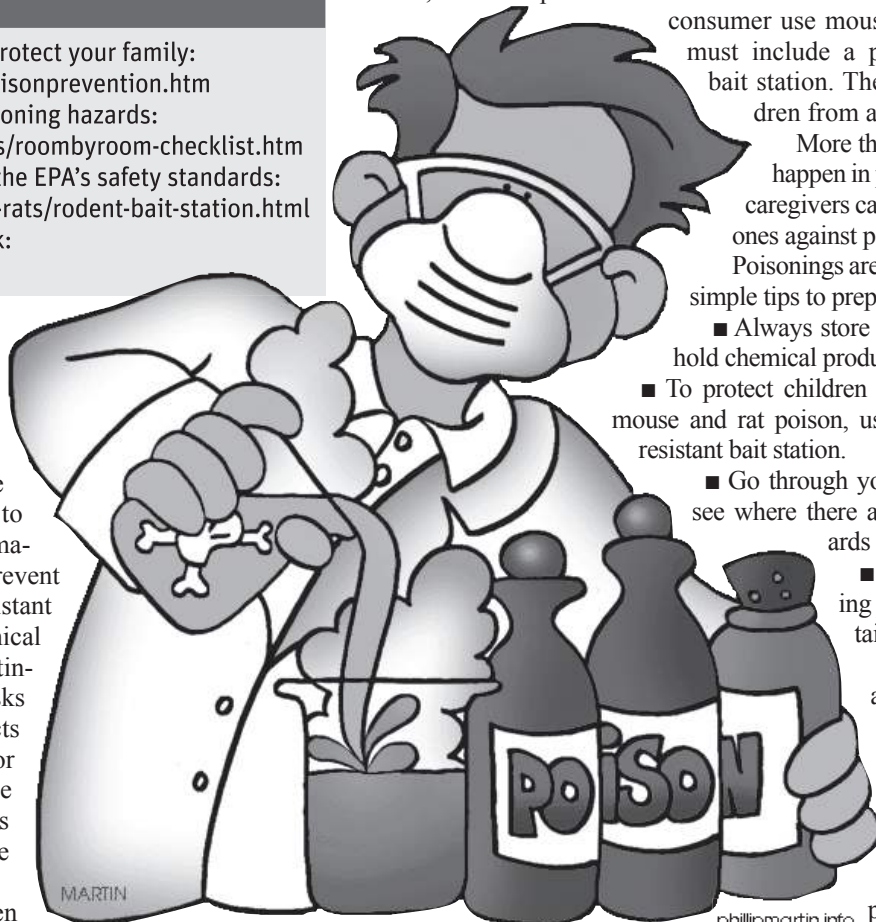
- Always store pesticides and other household chemical products in a locked cabinet.
- To protect children and pets from exposure to mouse and rat poison, use products with a tamper-resistant bait station.

■ Go through your home room by room to see where there are potential poisoning hazards and correct accordingly.

■ Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container tightly after use.

■ Never transfer pesticides and other household chemical products to containers that may be mistaken for food or drink.

■ Program the Poison Help Center number, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone. (EPA)



phillipmartin.info

EPA launches university challenge to find innovative uses for toxics data

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched the TRI University Challenge, a new initiative designed to use academic partnerships to find innovative uses for Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) data. TRI gives all Americans access to information about toxic chemicals in the environment as a tool to better protect health and the environment.

"For more than 20 years, individuals, organizations and communities have relied on TRI as a powerful tool for environmental protection,"

said Malcolm D. Jackson, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Environmental Information and Chief Information Officer. "Now, EPA is encouraging students and professors to submit ideas for new projects that will increase the knowledge, use, and understanding of TRI data."

EPA will accept TRI University Challenge applications until May 13, 2013, for projects that will begin this fall. Two informational webinars

about the challenge are planned for April.

Institutions whose project proposals are selected will become TRI University Challenge partners. Partners gain practical experience collaborating with

EPA to understand and solve local environmental challenges and may receive national recognition for their efforts. While no monetary assistance is available as part of this challenge, partners will receive direct support and guid-

ance from EPA TRI experts.

Priority will be given to projects related to one or more of the following four topics: pollution prevention and sustainability, stakeholder engagement, technology and data mashups, and environmental education.

TRI helps industry, government, non-governmental organizations and the public make environmentally responsible decisions by providing them with information about toxic chemical releases into the air, water and land. (USEPA)

ON THE NET

- www.epa.gov/tri/university

NASA: Alarming water loss in Middle East

DOHA, Qatar (AP)—An amount of freshwater almost the size of the Dead Sea has been lost in parts of the Middle East due to poor management, increased demands for groundwater and the effects of a 2007 drought, according to a NASA study.

The study, to be published Friday in *Water Resources Research*, a journal of the American Geophysical Union, examined data over seven years from 2003 from a pair of gravity-measuring satellites which is part of NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment or GRACE. Researchers found freshwater reserves in parts of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran along the Tigris and Euphrates river basins had lost 117 million acre feet (144 cubic kilometers) of its total stored freshwater, the second fastest loss of groundwater storage loss after India.

About 60 percent of the loss resulted from pumping underground reservoirs for ground water, including 1,000 wells in Iraq, and another fifth was due to impacts of the drought including declining snow packs and

soil drying up. Loss of surface water from lakes and reservoirs accounted for about another fifth of the decline, the study found.

"This rate of water loss is among the largest liquid freshwater losses on the continents," the authors wrote in the study, noting the declines were most obvious after a drought.

The study is the latest evidence of a worsening water crisis in the Middle East, where demands from growing populations, war and the worsening effects of climate change are raising the prospect that some countries could face severe water shortages in the decades to come. Some like impoverished Yemen blame their water woes on the semi-arid conditions and the grinding poverty while the oil-rich Gulf faces water shortages mostly due to the economic boom that has created glistening cities out of the desert.

In a report released during the U.N. climate talks in Qatar, the World Bank concluded among the most critical problems in the Middle East

and North Africa will be worsening water shortages. The region already has the lowest amount of freshwater in the world. With climate change, droughts in the region are expected to turn more extreme, water runoff is expected to decline 10 percent by 2050 while demand for water is expected to increase 60 percent by 2045.

One of the biggest challenges to improving water conservation is often competing demands which has worsened the problem in the Tigris and Euphrates river basins.

Turkey controls the Tigris and Euphrates headwaters, as well as the reservoirs and infrastructure of Turkey's Greater Anatolia Project, which dictates how much water flows downstream into Syria and Iraq, the researchers said. With no coordinated water management between the three countries, tensions have intensified since the 2007 drought because Turkey continues to divert water to irrigate farmland.

"That decline in stream flow put a lot of pressure on northern Iraq,"

Kate Voss, lead author of the study and a water policy fellow with the University of California's Center for Hydrological Modeling in Irvine, said. "Both the UN and anecdotal reports from area residents note that once stream flow declined, this northern region of Iraq had to switch to groundwater. In an already fragile social, economic and political environment, this did not help the situation."

Jay Famiglietti, principle investigator of the new study and a hydrologist and UC Irvine professor of Earth System Science, plans to visit the region later this month, along with Voss and two other UC Irvine colleagues, to discuss their findings and raise awareness of the problem and the need for a regional approach to solve the problem.

"They just do not have that much water to begin with, and they're in a part of the world that will be experiencing less rainfall with climate change," Famiglietti said. "Those dry areas are getting dryer. They and everyone else in the world's arid regions need to manage their available water resources as best they can."

Do Your Part as you prepare your garden for spring

By TERRI BENNETT
MCCLEACHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Some people call the holidays the "most wonderful time of the year." I disagree. Springtime is my favorite time. I can get in the garden, get my hands dirty, and spend time nurturing my flowers and vegetables. This season, I'm adding to my spring traditions by learning how honeybees can help my garden grow. Whether you want to go all out or are tiptoeing into your yard for the first time, Do Your Part to make eco-friendly choices as you begin prepping your lawn for warmer weather.

A good idea is to start with the basics. Knowing what your soil needs and more importantly, what it doesn't—is critical. Most county extension offices offer free soil testing kits. Scoop a sample of your soil in a box, send it in, and get a full analysis outlining exactly what nutrients your lawn needs. Many lawns actually don't need as much fertilizer as you think. You can also find budget friendly soil testing kits at home improvement stores.

Once your soil is in tiptop shape, focus on non-toxic ways to keep the weeds at bay. Before you reach for a big cocktail of weed killer, try a cheaper and safer solution such as old newspapers. Simply lay the paper out in four to six sheet thick sections and spray with water to set in place. Newspapers won't let the sunshine through to the weeds waiting to emerge. They also encourage earthworm activity that will eventually break down the paper, turning your present soil into better soil in the process. Consider covering the paper with mulch, leaves, or grass clippings.

Another easy way to save money and resources in the spring and summer is use a rain barrel—or two or three! I rely on the rain barrels I've installed outside my home. Some are containers I converted into a rain barrel with a kit from the hardware store. Others are ready-to-go versions that I bought and put to work. It only takes a matter of minutes to put together and then you have a free supply of water to nourish your lawn and garden throughout the warmer months. You can watch a quick video of me installing a rain barrel at DoYourPart.com/Columns.

And speaking of letting Mother Nature do the hard work for you, the bees I'm buying this season won't be the only creatures doing the heavy lifting for me. They will help pollinate my plants. A few of my favorite beneficial bugs will have their own jobs to do. Ladybugs will devour pests such as aphids—which are known for eating up ornamental plants. Praying mantis will consume pesky flies and mosquitoes. You can actually buy these bugs online or at many smaller garden centers.

So before you put on your gardening gloves and get to work, see how a few eco-friendly solutions can help you grow your dream garden safely and without busting your budget.

Bennett is a veteran TV meteorologist, eco-expert and author of 'Do Your Part: A practical guide for everyday green living available at DoYourPart.com. Send questions to terri@doyourpart.com

Life & Style

Ratings dip but 'American Idol' gets the ads

LOS ANGELES (AP)—In the heyday of “American Idol,” the notion that it could fall ratings victim to a zombie slugfest or standard crime drama would have been laughable.

That was then. With Fox’s singing contest shedding about 20 percent of its audience so far this season to hit new lows, it’s been leapfrogged repeatedly in total viewers by series including the CBS procedurals “Person of

Interest” and “NCIS.”

In a harsher blow to a blockbuster that once ruled the advertiser-adored young adult segment, “American Idol” has been overtaken this season by AMC’s “The Walking Dead,” despite the addition of glossy new “Idol” judges Mariah Carey, Nicki Minaj and Keith Urban.

But in its 12th season, “American Idol” is managing to hit the right notes with sponsors if not always with fickle viewers: It has retained its status as TV’s advertising leader among



In this Jan. 8, 2013 publicity photo released by Fox, “American Idol” Season 11, from left, Judges Randy Jackson, Mariah Carey, Keith Urban, Nicki Minaj and Host Ryan Seacrest answer questions from television critics during the 2013 FOX Winter TCA at the Langham Hotel, in Pasadena, Calif.

CHART TOPPERS

The top 10 songs and albums on the iTunes Store for the week ending March 25, 2013:

TOP SONGS

1. “Just Give Me a Reason (feat. Nate Ruess),” P!nk
2. “Thrift Shop (feat. Wanz),” Ryan Lewis, Macklemore
3. “Stay (feat. Mikky Ekko),” Rihanna
4. “When I Was Your Man,” Bruno Mars
5. “Suit & Tie (feat. JAY Z),” Justin Timberlake
6. “Feel This Moment (feat. Christina Aguilera),” Pitbull
7. “(hash)thatPOWER (feat. Justin Bieber),” will.i.am
8. “Harlem Shake,” Baauer
9. “Started from the Bottom,” Drake
10. “Radioactive,” Imagine Dragons

TOP ALBUMS

1. “The 20/20 Experience,” Justin Timberlake
2. “The Truth About Love,” P!nk
3. “Night Visions,” Imagine Dragons
4. “Same Trailer Different Park,” Kacey Musgraves
5. “The Heist,” Ryan Lewis, Macklemore
6. “Unorthodox Jukebox,” Bruno Mars
7. “Some Nights,” Fun.
8. “Spring Break...Here to Party,” Luke Bryan
9. “I Am Not a Human Being II (Deluxe Version),” Lil Wayne
10. “Now 45,” Various Artists

The top iPhone and iPad apps on App Store for the week ending March 25, 2013:

TOP PAID IPHONE APPS

1. Temple Run: Oz (Disney)
2. WhatsApp Messenger (WhatsApp Inc.)
3. Minecraft - Pocket Edition (Mojang)
4. Superstickman Golf 2 (Noodlecake Studios Inc.)
5. Wreck-it Ralph (Disney)
6. Sonic Dash (SEGA)
7. Plague Inc. (Ndemic Creations)
8. Ridiculous Fishing - A Tale of Redemption (Vlambeer)

9. Angry Birds Star Wars (Rovio Entertainment Ltd)
10. Arms Cartel Global (Pixel Addicts)

TOP FREE IPHONE APPS

1. Mini Golf MatchUp (Scopely - Top Free Apps and Games LLC)
2. NCAA March Madness Live (NCAA Digital)
3. ESPN Bracket Bound 2013 (ESPN)
4. Candy Crush Saga (King.com Limited)
5. 4 Pics 1 Word (LOTUM GmbH)
6. Skeeball 2 (Freeverse, Inc.)
7. YouTube (Google, Inc.)
8. Google Maps (Google, Inc.)
9. Vine (Vine Labs, Inc.)
10. Megapolis (Social Quantum)

TOP PAID IPAD APPS

1. Temple Run: Oz (Disney)
2. Minecraft - Pocket Edition (Mojang)
3. Wreck-it Ralph (Disney)
4. Plants vs. Zombies HD (PopCap)
5. Block Fortress (Foursaken Media)
6. Pages (Apple)
7. Super Stickman Golf 2 (Noodlecake Studios Inc.)
8. Team Umizoomi Math: Zoom into Numbers HD, Nickelodeon
9. Angry Birds Star Wars HD (Rovio Entertainment Ltd)
10. Toy Story: Smash it! (Disney)

TOP FREE IPAD APPS

1. NCAA March Madness Live (NCAA Digital)
2. Mini Golf MatchUp (Scopely - Top Free Apps and Games LLC)
3. Candy Crush Saga (King.com Limited)
4. CBS (CBS Interactive)
5. YouTube (Google, Inc.)
6. ESPN Bracket Bound 2013 (ESPN)
7. Ice Cream Truck: A Crazy Chef Adventure (TabTale LTD)
8. 4 Pics 1 Word (LOTUM GmbH)
9. The Croods (Rovio Entertainment Ltd)
10. Nitro (Z2Live, Inc.)

series and the loyalty of its biggest backers, including Ford and Coca-Cola.

“It’s still a top 10 show,” said Brad Adgate of media-buying firm Horizon Media. “Compared to several years ago, it’s not the ratings force it once was. ... But even if it loses 20 percent” again, it’s still valuable to Fox.

And there’s this confident prediction: When it comes to advertising dollars, the series “will have the top price for the 2012-13 season,” said analyst Jon Swallen of Kantar Media. Last season, “American Idol” grossed a leading \$836 million in ad revenue.

But the trajectory inevitably is headed down.

At the start of the 2011-12 season, “American Idol” was collecting about \$500,000 for a 30-second commercial on its Wednesday episodes, said analyst Deana Myers of SNL Kagan. That put it in an exclusive top tier, along with NBC’s “Sunday Night Football.”

By May 2012, when Phillip Phillips had been crowned the winner, the singing contest had posted its lowest-rated season since it debuted in summer 2002, and “Sunday Night Football” had snatched the No. 1 ratings spot away from singing contest for the first time since 2003.

The result: The current 2012-13 season began with prices cut to \$340,000 per spot for the higher-rated Wednesday performance night episode, Myers said. (That figure that is expected to rise as the show heads toward its finale and, presumably, bigger audiences.)

It’s true that growing cable competition and the fragile economy have made the broadcast ad market vulnerable. But by comparison, ABC’s sitcom “Modern Family” saw its fortunes improve, with its rate of

\$250,000 per commercial for the 2011-12 season rising to \$330,000 at this season start.

Another test is coming in May. At the annual “upfronts” in New York, broadcast networks will gather billions of dollars in advertising commitments for the 2013-14 season based on their series’ past and predicted viewership.

In its 13th year, will the “American Idol” share of that

bonanza shrink as much as this year’s ratings?

“You’re going to see a significant drop” in May, said Deana Myers of SNL Kagan.

But “American Idol” can claim to be a winner for Fox despite its weakened condition.

Yes, “Idol” is averaging about 15 million weekly viewers this year, compared to its 2006 peak of 30 million, according to Nielsen figures.

From ‘Idol’ to tour, Urban has no time to idle

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Keith Urban’s to-do list goes something like this: Provide the voice of reason on “American Idol,” choose and record songs for a new album, plan a tour of outdoor venues and arenas that starts this summer, coordinate and learn songs for an upcoming fundraiser concert, fly back and forth to London where wife Nicole Kidman is shooting a film, and carve out the right amount of time with his two young daughters.

“There’s a lot of creativity happening right now,” Urban said in a phone interview Monday. “I’m also building a studio at my house, just for the heck of it. Why not? Let’s do that, too. I had several meetings yesterday on a Sunday with various people, and it was like I’m choosing color fabrics for something or other and thinking about the song I’ve got to cut in the studio today. Dear Lord.”

Some of the things that are keeping the 45-year-old Australian country music star-TV personality busy: ■ “American Idol”: Urban’s

not even through his first season on the Fox network singing competition, but he already knows he’d consider doing it again if asked. He’s managed to navigate early tensions between fellow judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj, and says he’s getting to know the real people behind the on-air personas of his fellow judges, a group that also includes Randy Jackson.

“Being on this panel, I love the color of it all—Nicki, Randy and Mariah,” Urban said. “I like being on this panel. I like that we don’t agree on everything. We come from different places. I think that’s important.”

■ His new album: Urban never set a formal release date, but feels like he’s falling behind. He plans lots of guests, so that’s slowed things down as he’s tried to integrate everyone’s schedules. The album’s release might not come until late summer.

■ The “Light the Fuse” tour, starting July 18: There may be something a little different for those who hit one of his outdoor shows starting this summer, including his first trip to

Yes, the audience’s median age has jumped more than 18 years, to 50.4, from season one to last year—meaning that youth-obsessed Madison Avenue is facing consumers more likely to be eyeing retirement funds than a prom date.

And yes, the show’s alumni include success stories Kelly Clarkson, Jennifer Hudson and Carrie Underwood, but more recent winners, such as Lee DeWyze and Phillips, have yet to prove themselves as stars in music, movies or elsewhere.

“Idol” also faces a crowded talent contest field and younger challengers like NBC’s “The Voice.” A second, spring edition of that show debuted Monday night and was up 9 percent over its fall premiere with 13.4 million viewers.

But there is value yet to be found in the aging but still sturdy Fox show. Not many shows can draw weekly audiences of 10 million-plus today, given the splintered media world in which broadcast, cable, online amusements and video games clamor for consumer attention.

“American Idol” remains one of them and, given the challenge of keeping younger viewers from hopping to the next big thing, does a credible job of changing up its bells and whistles to keep the fickle engaged.



Urban

the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. “There’s a chance that we’ll start the tour before the album comes out,” Urban said. “So in a strange, weird way, people may be hearing songs off the new album live before they hear the album. That’s never happened before, but that’s where we are.”

■ The fundraiser: Urban has picked the theme “Rebels and Renegades, The Outlaws Are In” for his Country Music Hall of Fame fundraiser on April 16 at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville, and he’s lined up some of country’s most notable mavericks. The list includes Willie Nelson, Loretta Lynn, Kris Kristofferson, Hank Williams Jr., Jason Aldean, Eric Church and Rosanne Cash.

Note that sleep isn’t on the list. Urban admits he can sometimes feel the weight of all there is to do, but he’s figured out a coping mechanism.

“I know in 30 years’ time, I’m going to look back at this moment and go, ‘Oh, my God, what a great time. I should have enjoyed that more,’” he said. “So I really think of that and it’s sort of like I exhale and just slow down and go, ‘OK, what’s the next thing? What’s the next thing?’”

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G.I. Joe: Retaliation 3D
Thursday 1:25 7:25

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Bruce Willis, Channing Tatum
Genre: Action • Rated PG 13

Synopsis
Dance film director veteran Jon Chu takes a crack at G.I. Joe in this sequel to Stephen Sommers' blockbuster 2009 film. Channing Tatum returns as Duke, the leader of the Joes, with Ray Park joining him as the mute ninja, Snake Eyes.

G.I. Joe: Retaliation 2D
Thursday 4:25

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Bruce Willis, Channing Tatum
Genre: Action • Rated PG 13

The Croods 3D
Thursday 1:15 7:15

Cast: Emma Stone, Nicolas Cage, Ryan Reynolds
Genre: Children's/Family • Rated PG

The Croods 2D
Thursday 4:15

Cast: Emma Stone, Nicolas Cage, Ryan Reynolds
Genre: Children's/Family • Rated PG

Olympus Has Fallen
Thursday 1:30 4:30 7:30

Cast: Gerard Butler, Morgan Freeman, Aaron Eckhart
Genre: Action • Rated R

The Incredible Burt Wonderstone
Thursday 1:05 4:05 7:05

Cast: Steve Carell, Olivia Wilde, Steve Buscemi
Genre: Comedy • Rated PG 13

Oz The Great and Powerful 3D
Thursday 1:00 7:00

Cast: James Franco, Rachel Weisz, Michelle Williams
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG

Oz The Great and Powerful 2D
Thursday 4:00

Cast: James Franco, Rachel Weisz, Michelle Williams
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG

Jack The Giant Slayer 2D
Thursday 1:20 4:20 7:20

Cast: Nicholas Hoult, John Kassir, Ewan McGregor
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG 13

Snitch
Thursday 1:10 4:10 7:10

Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Benjamin Bratt, Barry Pepper
Genre: Action • Rated PG 13

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Timberlake's '20/20' album sells 968K in 1st week

NEW YORK (AP)—Justin Timberlake's comeback album has sold nearly 1 million units its first week out.

Nielsen SoundScan announced Tuesday that the singer's third album, "The 20/20 Experience," has moved 968,000 units. It's the 19th album in Nielsen's 22-year history that has sold more than 900,000 albums in a single week.

"20/20" is Timberlake's third album and the follow-up to his multiplatinum, Grammy-winning 2006 album, "FutureSex/LoveSound." The new CD features the pop hit "Suit & Tie."

"The numbers are pleasantly surprising," said Tom Corson, the president and chief operating officer of RCA Records, which released Timberlake's album.

The label had projected that "20/20" would sell 500,000 to 600,000 units, Corson said.

Timberlake, 31, was strategic about promoting his comeback effort: He performed at the Grammy Awards, hosted and hit the stage at "Saturday Night Live" and spent an entire week on "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon." The singer also partnered with Target for the album's deluxe edition and "20/20" streamed on iTunes a week before it was released.

Timberlake came up with the idea of a weeklong stint himself, Fallon said.

"I think he mentioned it to me like a year ago that he's working on something and wanted to do a week on our show," Fallon said Tuesday.

"20/20" is an unconventional album that features a mesh of R&B, soul, pop and futuristic



In this Feb. 20, 2013 file photo, Justin Timberlake performs on stage during the BRIT Awards 2013 at the O2 Arena in London.

sounds. The 10 tracks average seven minutes each.

Corson believes Timberlake's key to promoting the album was "less is more."

"While it felt like he was everywhere, he didn't do a lot of things because he didn't have to. But he did big things," he said.

Fallon even joked that other celebrities are trying to follow in Timberlake's footsteps with a

weeklong stay on his show.

"We're getting a lot of phone calls now to do themed-weeks for people," said Fallon, who added that the show's writers and producers developed a load of material for "Timberweek."

"We have enough for another month," he said. "We could have 'Timbermonth.' Trust me, NBC is already pitching it to me."

Of the 19 albums to sell

more than 900,000 in a single week, Timberlake holds three slots. His albums with 'N Sync, 2000's "No Strings Attached" and 2001's "Celebrity," sold 2.4 million and 1.9 million in their first week, respectively. Backstreet Boys, Lil Wayne and Taylor Swift have two albums each that have hit that level.

The excitement over the new album has also boosted sales of Timberlake's other solo albums, Nielsen Co. said. Last year, "FutureSex/LoveSound" and 2002's "Justified" sold 39,000 and 21,000 copies each, but this year they've already sold 29,000 and 17,000, respectively.

"As the marketing sort of picks up for the new record and the single goes to radio ... you definitely start to see interest," said David Bakula, Nielsen's senior vice president of client development and analytics for entertainment.

Bakula said 'N Sync sales are up, too.

Fallon said Timberlake worked tirelessly ahead of the five shows and he's proud of his friend's success.

"Justin was here till 11 o'clock most nights choreographing dance moves so he nailed it the next night," he said. "And he was sick at the time."

Corson said this week's success could change the expectation of Timberlake's follow-up to "20/20," which will likely be released later this year.

"It sure should," he said with a laugh. "Part two is now even more anticipated."

Timberlake could even show up for a stint on Fallon again.

"We are already talking about it," Fallon said.

Argentine illustrator wins child literature prize

STOCKHOLM (AP)—Argentine illustrator and writer Marisol Misenta, better known as Isol, won the 5 million kronor (\$780,000) Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for children's literature on Tuesday for picture books that "vibrate with energy and explosive emotions," the prize jury said.

Isol has written and illustrated 10 children's books, starting with her 1997 debut "Vida de Perros" ("A Dog's Life"). She has also illustrated works by

other authors, including Argentine poet Jorge Lujan and U.S. novelist Paul Auster.

Her illustrations have the feel of a child's drawings, which she says reflects her desire to show readers that it's OK to break the rules.

"The idea is to do something both artistic and fun, which breaks a bit from what's expected," she told The Associated Press. "I like playing with words, and surprising people. The fact is that any truly artistic

work has this quality. I want my books to be fun for children and for adults, too."

The annual award—the world's largest for children's literature—is named after the late Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren, creator of the Pippi Longstocking book series.

Isol's work is "humorous with surprising twists, occasionally philosophical and always subtle," the prize committee said. "Isol is on the children's side, seeing the world through

their eyes and exposing the absurdities of the adult world."

Isol told AP she's been able to make a living for about four years on the income from her books, but couldn't imagine what she would do with the prize money.

"I've never had a strategy based on earning money," she said. "I never count on things before having them. Only now can I begin to think about what to do."

The award will be presented at a ceremony in Stockholm on May 27.

Helen Mirren up for best actress at Olivier awards

LONDON (AP)—Helen Mirren received another accolade for her royal performance as Queen Elizabeth II on Tuesday—a best-actress nomination at Britain's Olivier theater awards.

Mirren is nominated for "The Audience," alongside Hattie Morahan for "A Doll's House," Billie Piper for "The Effect" and Kristin Scott Thomas for "Old Times."

Best-actor nominees are Rupert Everett for his turn as Oscar Wilde in "The Judas Kiss"; James McAvoy for

"Macbeth"; Mark Rylance for "Twelfth Night"; Rafe Spall for "Constellations"; and Luke Treadaway for "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time."

Nominees for musicals include Michael Ball and Imelda Staunton for "Sweeney Todd," Alex Bourne and Hannah Waddingham for "Kiss Me, Kate," and Heather Headley for "The Bodyguard."

"The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time"—based on Mark Haddon's novel about

a mystery-solving boy with Asperger's syndrome—has eight nominations, and jaunty musical "Top Hat" seven. The prizes celebrate the best of London theater, opera and dance.

Two political dramas—regal reflection "The Audience" and rough-and-tumble Parliamentary saga "This House"—are up for best new play, alongside love story "Constellations" and "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time."

Best new musical nominees are geeks-made-good

story "Loserville," Tina Turner tribute "Soul Sister," movie-inspired "The Bodyguard" and high-stepping "Top Hat."

Winners in most categories are chosen by a panel of theater professionals and members of the public. Nominees for the Audience Award, decided by public vote, are "Billy Elliot," "Matilda: The Musical," "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Wicked."

Winners will be announced April 28 during a ceremony at London's Royal Opera House.

Authorities: Neighbor claims battery by Bieber

CALABASAS, Calif. (AP)—Deputies were investigating claims made Tuesday by a neighbor that Justin Bieber attacked and threatened him during an argument in suburban Los Angeles, authorities said.

No one was arrested and few details were immediately available.

A representative of Bieber, Melissa Victor, did not immediately return a request for comment.

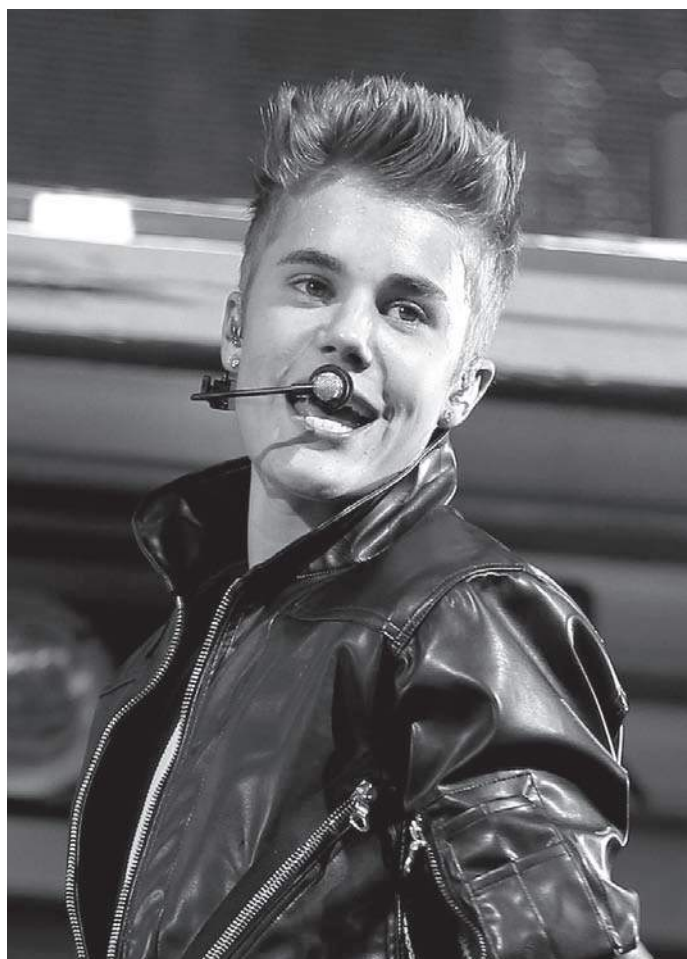
Online schedules indicate the “Baby” singer is in the midst of a European tour and performed a show in Poland on Monday night.

Authorities were called to the Calabasas scene just after 9 a.m., said Steve Whitmore, spokesman for the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

“There have been allegations made against Mr. Bieber of battery and making threats,” Whitmore said.

It’s unclear who called authorities, and whether there might have been previous problems between the 19-year-old singer and neighbors, Whitmore said.

In recent years, the Canadian singer has been constantly



In this Sept. 30, 2012 file photo, Justin Bieber performs at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. AP

chased by paparazzi while publicly morphing from an almost angelic mop-topped teen to an adult battling a bad boy image.

Recently, Bieber lashed out at paparazzi and lunged at one photographer as members of the singer’s entourage held him back.

Last summer, he got a speeding ticket while trying to avoid a bevy of photographers on a Los Angeles freeway in his distinctive chrome Fisker Karma.

He collapsed backstage during a recent London concert and canceled a performance in Portugal.

Prosecutors decided against filing charges after the pop star was accused of kicking and punching a photographer outside a Calabasas movie theater in May 2012.

Earlier this year, an ex-bodyguard sued Bieber for alleged assault and more than \$420,000 in unpaid wages. Moshe Benabou claims Bieber repeatedly punched him in the chest after an argument over the singer’s entourage.

Lately, the slim singer has taken to whipping off his shirt in public places.

The investigation was first reported by TMZ.com.

Parents should lay down law on importance of bike helmets

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: As a law enforcement officer, I would like to comment on your reply to “Overprotective Mom” (Dec. 26). I agree with your solution to have the boy who wouldn’t wear his bike helmet because it was “uncool” visit a facility that treats people with traumatic brain injuries. However, you missed a golden opportunity to remind parents that they are the parents, and because they are responsible for their child’s safety, THEY are in charge!

What has happened to plain old “parenting”? Time and again, I see children make their own rules because the parents have shrugged off the responsibility of parenting. You should have told them to tell their child that if he won’t wear a helmet, his bike will be taken away until he does.

BILL IN BARTLESVILLE, OKLA.

DEAR BILL: You and many readers are right. I DID overlook the issue of parenting in my reply. Mea culpa! Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Have “Overprotective Mom” ask her son if he thinks firefighters, fighter pilots, police officers and football players are “uncool.” They all wear helmets!

JAMES IN HASTINGS, NEB.

DEAR ABBY: Not wearing a bike helmet to be “cool” is knuckling under to peer pressure. Those parents should use this opportunity to explain peer pressure and its consequences to their son.

He needs to understand that he must make decisions for himself, and his “friends” should accept him for who he is. He needs to learn to stand his ground and be who he wants to be despite what others think of him. He also needs to learn to make decisions that affect his life based on facts, and not follow the crowd. True friends will most often make the same sound decisions that he makes, or accept his decision without pressuring him.

One other comment: Require the kid to wear a helmet or forfeit the right to ride a bike. It’s called “tough love” and although it is tough, it is also rewarding. More parents need to have sound, well-thought-out rules and stick to them.

PARENT FIRST, FRIEND SECOND

DEAR ABBY: Patients cannot be used as exhibits, even with the best of intentions. It would be unethical and also illegal under HIPAA laws. A better option would be to contact the injury prevention office at a local children’s hospital and ask for tips. If your readers don’t live near one, there are websites filled with helpful information.

LAURIE IN DALLAS

DEAR ABBY: It’s true that there is no state code law in Texas regarding bicycle helmets, but many municipalities, including Dallas, have ordinances that require riders to wear them. That mother should check her city code.

CONCERNED IN TEXAS

DEAR ABBY: “Overprotective” should let her son choose a “cool” helmet and be sure it’s fitted correctly. Going to a bike shop may be the best bet.

Serious bikers are cool and will be supportive. The boy should select the style and color he wants and decorate it with hot stickers or whatever he wishes. If that doesn’t work, then take the bike away. It’s the kind of cause-and-effect discipline that really works.

BARBARA IN RUMFORD, MAINE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order “How to Be Popular.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Martin Gore on new Depeche Mode CD, Frank Ocean

NEW YORK (AP)—British electro-pop group Depeche Mode kind of sounds like The Beatles—at least on one track from their new album.

“It’s a bad thing to say this because everyone is going to say, ‘What are you talking about?’ But it reminds me of The Beatles or something,” chief songwriter and founding member Martin Gore said with a laugh, referring to the bluesy song “Goodbye.”

He added: “That’s a dangerous thing to say.”

But Gore doesn’t want fans to confuse the message of Depeche Mode’s new album. Their sig-

ABC Family says ‘Pretty Little Liars’ spinoff a go

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC Family is banking big on its biggest hit “Pretty Little Liars,” green-lighting it for another season and approving a spinoff.

The network announced Tuesday it renewed the series starring Lucy Hale and Ashley Benson for a fifth season.

The new show “Ravenswood” will follow five strangers whose lives become intertwined by a deadly curse that has plagued their town for generations.

“Pretty Little Liars” is about teens in the fictional town of Rosewood, Penn., whose best friend was murdered. Since her death they’ve been continuously harassed via text and pranks by a mysterious figure known as “A.” It’s based on the best-selling book series by Sara Shepard.

“Ravenswood” is slated to premiere in October.

“Pretty Little Liars” returns for season four in June.

nature electronic grooves are all over “Delta Machine,” the trio’s 13th release, out this week.

“We had a clear-cut vision in our heads on what the album should be,” Gore said.

Depeche Mode has released al-

bums since 1981. Their hits include “People Are People,” “Enjoy the Silence” and “Policy of Truth.”

The band, which also includes singer David Gahan and multi-instrumentalist Andy Fletcher, will launch a world tour on

April 5 in Nice, France.

In a recent phone interview with The Associated Press, Gore, 51, talked about his family, the new album, the state of electronic music and collaborating with Frank Ocean.

Amanda Knox book, interview go on as planned

SEATTLE (AP)—Amanda Knox’s memoir and interview with ABC’s Diane Sawyer will go on as planned, despite an Italian court overturning her 2011 murder acquittal.

Italy’s highest criminal court ordered a new trial for Knox and former Italian boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito on Tuesday, overturning their acquittals in the gruesome slaying of her British roommate, Meredith Kercher.

Spokesman David Ford says an ABC News Primetime Special scheduled to air April 30 is moving forward as planned. It will be the first in-depth interview Knox has given since returning to Seattle.

Knox also has a memoir, “Waiting to Be Heard,” due out on the same day as her television interview. Based on pre-orders, the book’s ranking on Amazon.com moved from just above 2,400 Tuesday morning to 470 Tuesday afternoon.

HarperCollins spokeswoman Tina Andreadis says the book plans have not changed.



In this Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2011 file photo Amanda Knox gestures at a news conference in Seattle Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2011, after returning home from Italy. AP

Singer Dionne Warwick files for bankruptcy in NJ

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)—Singer Dionne Warwick claims in a recent bankruptcy filing that she owes nearly \$10 million in back taxes and her monthly expenses exceed \$20,000.

The South Orange resident and singer of classics such as “Walk On By,” “I Say a Little Prayer” and “Do You Know the Way to San Jose” filed a Chapter 7 petition in U.S. bankruptcy court in New Jersey last Thursday.

In the filing, the 72-year-old Warwick listed liabilities that include nearly \$7 million owed

to the Internal Revenue Service for the years 1991 to 1999 and more than \$3 million in business taxes owed to the state of California.

Warwick, a cousin of the late Whitney Houston, also listed \$20,950 in monthly income from royalties, retirement income and a contract with Culver City, Calif.-based Star Girl Productions. Her monthly expenses total \$20,940 and include \$5,000 for house-keeping/housesitting.

Warwick’s publicist said that the singer was victimized by

bad financial management in the 1990s and that she has paid back the actual amount of the taxes, but penalties and interest have accumulated over the years.

“In light of the magnitude of her tax liabilities, (Dionne) Warwick has repeatedly attempted to offer re-payment plans and proposals to the IRS and the California Franchise Tax Board for taxes owed,” Kevin Sasaki said in an email Tuesday. “These plans were not accepted, resulting in escalating interest and penalties. Although the actual amount of back taxes owed has been paid, the resulting penalties and interest has continually accrued.”

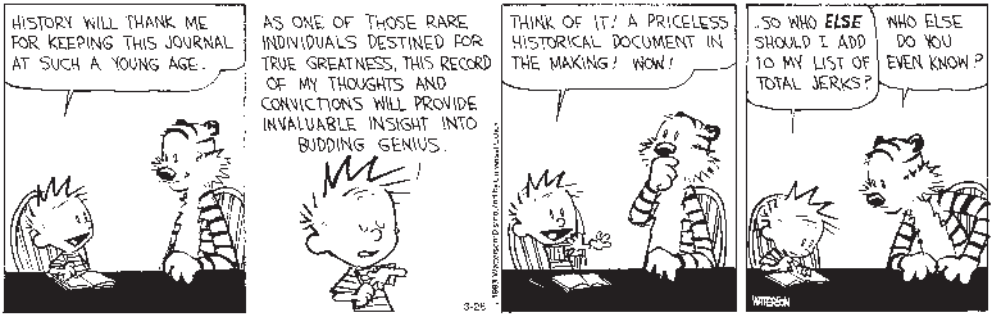


Warwick

Pastimes

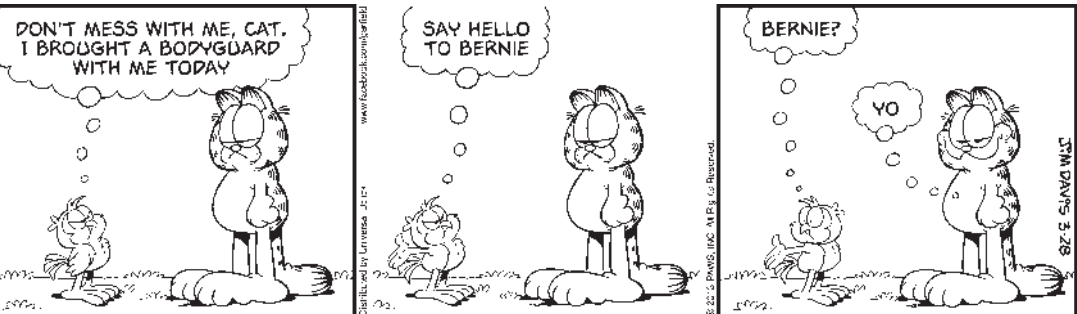
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



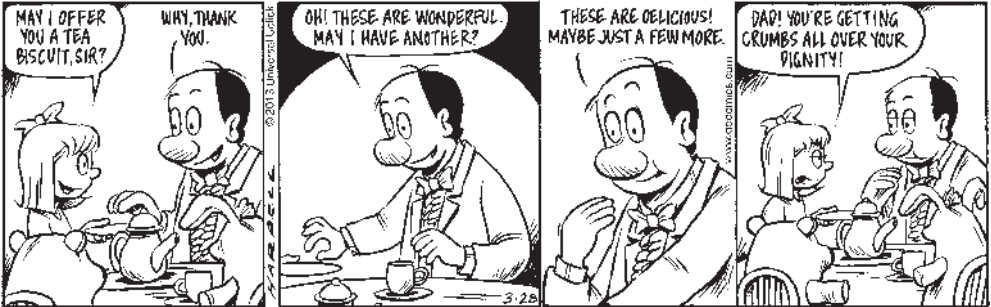
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Church section

5 Gangster's girlfriend

9 GPS forerunner?

12 Contemptible

13 Met melody

14 Expert

15 Grand

17 Scooted

18 Baltimore athlete

19 Luxurious fabric

21 Rocky Balboa's greeting

22 Native New Zealander

24 Lowers the lights

27 Proscription

28 Make a sweater

31 Historic time

32 Table scrap

33 Id counterpart

34 Zinger

36 Anat. or biol.

37 Fermi's bit

38 Nothing

40 My group

41 Money under the table

43 Star-related

47 Knock

48 Bread spread

51 Greek H

52 Reed

53 Lotion additive

54 Lair

55 Collars

56 Longings

2 Orchard fruit

3 Ganges garment

4 Representative

5 Guy

6 Plata partner

7 Lucy of "Elementary"

8 Cow catcher

9 Strict disciplinarian

10 "Superfood"

11 Teller's partner

16 "Xanadu" band, for short

20 Clumsy craft

22 Parade

23 Opposed

24 Society newbie

25 401(k) alternative

26 Almond confection

27 Variety of 2-Down

29 "Where did — wrong?"

30 Huck's pal

35 Baby's cover-up

37 Off

39 Lousy car

40 "Born in the —"

41 Raised

42 Assess

43 Census statistics

44 Anger

45 Unsigned (Abbr.)

46 Dregs

49 Lawyers' org.

50 Burgle

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterdays answer 3-28

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lady Gaga, 27; Julia Stiles, 32; Vince Vaughn, 43; Reba McEntire, 58.

Happy Birthday: Use your past experience to help you make wise choices. Stand up for your rights and refuse to let anyone take advantage of you. Look for alternative ways to subsidize your income in order to explore and develop your skills, talents and desires. Let your intuition guide you when it comes to love and romance. Curb impulsiveness. Your numbers are 8, 11, 19, 23, 27, 32, 40.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Start planning an adventure. Travel or exploring a new pastime will boost your spirits and encourage you to open up emotionally. Love is in the stars, and taking time to get to know someone better will lead to greater personal options. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): An idea you have can help reform a situation you are involved in that isn't working. An interesting partnership can also lead to greater opportunity and good fortune. Be careful when traveling or dealing with authority. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your ideas are good but going about getting what you want must be handled with honesty and integrity regardless of what's at stake. Find a solution that doesn't jeopardize your reputation and you will come out the victor. Love is on the rise. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Stay away from unpredictable people looking for an out. Follow your instincts and work toward a goal that will benefit you or pad your

resume. Keep your emotions in check or you will appear vulnerable and weak. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Boast about what you have to offer and you will get the chance to show your talent. Fixing up your place or reconfiguring where you place your investments will result in more assets. Someone will be jealous of your accomplishments. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Consider what's being offered or what the people around you are doing or inferring. Don't expect to get the whole truth, but if you tune in to what's being said, you will intuitively figure out what you must do to protect your position. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Put more time and effort into your personal and professional partnerships. Having a greater understanding of what you can offer one another will make it easier to move forward positively with a set goal or destination. Love is amplified. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't share too much information with your peers or colleagues. You have to make sure you have everything in place to avoid anyone from derailing what you want to see transpire. You'll instinctively know when to make your next move. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Stick close to home and make alterations that will help improve your surroundings as well as your lifestyle. Love and romance are prevalent, and an understanding you share with someone will help you reach your destination on time. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Put greater emphasis on whatever job you've been given. Letting someone sidetrack you will lead to greater delays and problems with superiors or clients. Someone is likely to have a change of heart. Listen to grievances, but don't fold under pressure. **

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Settlements and contracts can be dealt with in your personal and professional affairs. Love is on the rise, and sharing your space with someone special will enhance your relationship. Past experience will help you excel now. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't limit what you can do because you are afraid of the consequences. Size up your situation and follow the path your intuition designates. You have more control than you realize and you can make a difference if you stand up for your rights. ***

Birthday Baby: You are adaptable, intuitive and quick to react. You are loving and positive.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★★

3/28

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

Difficulty Level ★★★

3/27

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SPICY MAYONNAISE Solution: 5 letters

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TMUULISABOTTLEO
ULIOIKROPSBREHR
ROLLSCONDIMENTS
KANUTIYMAEBCDSE
EFSALTKHSSSKIR
YHWSHCPIEAPASAI
ISHGIEAHGSEIND
IIPHNPCEGTUACLI
HLTPNIKOSHERSYS
TEEOWHISKBOCTYH
ORYDIPPINGACTUI
OANUGGETSAPCDAC
MAKIRPAPEVILLOOS
SALADWRAPSPRING

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Bacon, Basil, Beans, Beef, Blend, Bottle, Burger, Citrus, Condiments, Creamy, Deli, Dipping, Easy, Eggs, Herbs, Horseradish, Hot Dog, Juicy, Kosher, Light, Lime, Loaf, Mayonnaise, Nuggets, Olive, Paprika, Paste, Pepper, Pork, Relish, Rich, Rolls, Sage, Salad, Salt, Sandwiches, Sauce, Smooth, Soup, Spicy, Spring, Steaks, Sushi, Thick, Tuna, Turkey, Whisk, White, Wraps

Yesterday's Answer: Pockets

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Saipan Tribune

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ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, -vs- ESTEBAN SARALU BUEKIS and KIKIKO K. BUEKIS, Defendants.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on May 15, 2012, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 1243, situated in Kagman III, Phase IV, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 948 square meters, more or less, as shown on DLS Check No. 011 G 23 dated December 9, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 96-2566, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, April 5, 2013, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

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Nowitzki, Paul get 33, Mavs beat Clippers in OT



DALLAS (AP)—The Dallas Mavericks finally have a win over one of the top four teams headed to the Western Conference playoffs—just in time for their own postseason push.

Dirk Nowitzki had a season-high 33 points, including the first eight for Dallas in overtime, and the Mavericks moved within a game of .500 for the first time since mid-December with a 109-102 victory against the Los Angeles Clippers on Tuesday night.

More importantly for the Mavericks, they're just a game behind the Los Angeles Lakers for the final playoff spot in the West with 11 games remaining. They've won nine of their past 12 and improved to 1-11 against the top four teams in the West.

"We've fought an uphill battle all season long," said Nowitzki, who also led Dallas with nine rebounds. "Honestly, we're playing the best basketball we have all season. So we gotta keep this momentum going."

Chris Paul matched Nowitzki with 33—also his season high—but the Clippers went more than 4 minutes without a field goal in overtime after Paul put them ahead 42 seconds into the extra period.

The game went to overtime after a wild final 5 seconds in regulation starting with a go-ahead layup by Paul. O.J. Mayo answered when he slipped the ball in from behind the backboard to tie the score at 97-all with 0.6 seconds left.

With coach Vinny Del Negro signaling for a timeout, the Clippers threw it in anyway. Blake Griffin caught the long pass in the lane and flipped the ball in the basket in one motion, but was called for an offensive foul for pushing Nowitzki while the pass was in the air. Dallas got the ball back but was 70 feet from the basket and couldn't get a shot off.

"Those are tough calls," said Del Negro, whose team lost the opener of a four-game road trip that makes three stops in Texas. "I have to look at it. That wasn't the difference. They made some tough shots and we weren't able to convert on a couple of plays down the stretch."

Nowitzki put Dallas ahead for good at 101-100 on a jumper, and the Clippers missed their next seven shots. The only point over a stretch of 4:10 was a free throw by DeAndre Jordan, who had 11 rebounds.

Matt Barnes had a chance to tie it on a wide-open 3-pointer with Dallas leading 103-100 with 22 seconds left, but he shot an air ball.

"It was grit and guts," Dallas coach Rick Carlisle said. "It was like Russian roulette out there because when you go chasing Chris Paul around you leave a lot of guys open for shots. So,



Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki (41) celebrates scoring two points during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Clippers, Tuesday, March 26, 2013, in Dallas.

we gambled and won."

A game-time decision because of a sore left knee, Paul was strong from start to finish. He had 10 points in the first quarter and scored the last 10 of regulation and the first two of overtime.

In the final minute of regulation, Vince Carter put Dallas ahead with two free throws before Paul answered quickly. After a turnover by Carter, Paul hit a tough layup on the baseline, setting up Mayo's tying bucket.

"I have to play better defense," Paul said. "I let (Mayo) get a layup. We have to make them beat us tougher than that."

Griffin and Caron Butler had 14 apiece for Los Angeles, and DeAndre Jordan had 11 rebounds.

Mayo finished with 11, while Carter had 14, and Darren Collison 13. Dallas had six players in double figures.

The Mavericks led 90-89 when Paul fell after a jumper and Mike James was called for a technical after picking up his fifth foul for getting under Paul, who slightly turned his ankle on James' foot. Paul hit two of the three free throws, then had a jumper after a Dallas miss for a 93-90 lead.

Dallas got even at 93-93 when Mayo converted a three-point play after getting fouled by Paul

on a jumper in the lane.

Lamar Odom was booed loudly when he entered and every time he touched the ball in his first trip to Dallas since a disastrous 2011-12 season with the Mavericks. He was so unhappy, they put him on the inactive list late in the year even though they were fighting for playoff survival. He averaged a career-worst 6.6 points for Dallas, but is setting a new low at 4.1 per game in his return to the Clippers, his first team.

Even when he wasn't playing, Odom kept showing up on the big video screens above the court, drawing more boos. He almost matched his season average with four points in the second quarter and finished with six points and six rebounds.

"I've played in really hostile environments all my life," Odom said. "You got to expect that. That's what we love about sports."

Knicks 100, Celtics 85

In Boston, J.R. Smith scored 32 points, Carmelo Anthony added 29 and the New York Knicks extended their winning streak to five games with a victory over the Boston Celtics.

The win moved the Knicks into second place in the Eastern Conference, percentage points

ahead of the Indiana Pacers. The Celtics, who could face the Knicks in the first round of the playoffs, lost their fifth game in a row and remained in seventh.

The Celtics, playing their second straight game without Kevin Garnett, were led by Jeff Green with 19 points and Paul Pierce with 16. But they committed 20 turnovers, while the Knicks, who average the fewest turnovers in the NBA, had just eight.

Timberwolves 105, Pistons 82

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Nikola Pekovic had 18 points and 11 rebounds to lead Minnesota Timberwolves to a rare road win.

The game matched one of the league's worst home teams against one of the worst on the road. The Pistons haven't won at home since before the All-Star break, losing seven straight, while Minnesota had lost 10 of its last 11 road games.

Reserve J.J. Barea matched a season-best with 21 points for Minnesota, while Luke Ridnour scored 15 and Ricky Rubio added 14 points and nine assists.

Greg Monroe had 11 points and 12 rebounds for Detroit, while point guard Jose Calderon scored 14 points but only had one assist.

Heat still not fixated on winning streak

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

The Los Angeles Lakers made it look easy when they racked up win after win after win for an NBA-record 33 straight games.

The Miami Heat, not so much.

Those Lakers of 1971-72 won 17 games during that streak by 15 points or more. The Heat take more of a grind-it-out approach, often getting into trouble before flipping a switch and pulling away.

"We're going to get everybody's best shot because of the streak," Heat guard Mario Chalmers said.

That's why instead of savoring the 27 in a row they've already won, the Heat are bracing for perhaps one of the biggest road tests so far in their pursuit of those Lakers. Miami plays at Chicago on Wednesday night, a renewal of a rivalry that, on paper, certainly has lost some of the sparkle it had a year or two ago.

The Bulls still don't have injured point guard Derrick Rose back in the lineup and have lost 13 of their last 22 games. Still, the Heat expect a playoff-type, rough-and-tumble meeting.

"Our historic run is about winning championships," Heat star LeBron James said. "That's what we want to be known for. It's part of a process. Whatever comes in between that, we can be excited about it. We didn't have a goal in mind to say, 'Let's go on a long consecutive win streak,' but our goal is to win every game when we are on the floor."

In recent days, that hasn't been easy. Boston had the Heat down by 17 early and 13 in the fourth quarter. Cleveland put Miami in a 27-point hole, and in Detroit and Charlotte, the Heat trailed by 11 before pulling away. On Monday night, the Orlando Magic and Heat were tied late in the third quarter before James keyed a 20-2 run that changed everything.

"We like knowing we have that switch," guard Dwyane Wade said. "We just don't want to use it too much."

Chicago has already beaten the Heat once this season, on Miami's home floor. On Friday, the Heat head to New Orleans, where the Hornets just snapped Denver's 15-game winning streak. And Sunday's game at San Antonio is against not only the Western Con-

ference leader and potential NBA Finals opponent, but also likely will have huge implications for the No. 1 overall playoff seed.

Whether the opponent is a playoff team like Chicago or a lottery-bound club, James said the approach has been steady.

"It has been tough all year," he said. "It hasn't been easy for us at all. Every team has given us their best. We know that Chicago is going to be a tough game for us, and playing in that building. We want to come out with our game plan ... and give ourselves a chance to win."

Since Miami landed James and Chris Bosh to play alongside Wade in the summer of 2010, no team has confounded the Heat more than the Bulls, and it's not even close. The Heat and Bulls have played 14 times since then, each team winning seven, and Miami averaged only 90.1 points in those games. That's six points less than they averaged against anyone else in that span, and 11 points shy of what they typically score against the rest of the league.

"You can't necessarily gauge them against other teams," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said Monday night, after Miami topped Orlando 108-94. "When they play against us, it's highly competitive. We've played them in the playoffs. All of our games have been physical and hotly contested. You have to deal with the physical aspect but also the mental aspect of staying with it, grinding possessions."

Moments after the Heat extended their winning streak to 27, Spoelstra urged his team to be "grateful for this opportunity and stay in this moment."

That's his way of saying, yes, enjoy the moment but don't lose sight of the only goal that matters—another NBA title. That's what the players talked about in the locker room after the Orlando game, as they wolfed down chicken, pasta and vegetables and headed to the bus.

"To be honest with you, we don't really think about the streak," Heat forward Udonis Haslem said. "People might find this hard to believe, but if you start thinking about a streak, that's when you slip up. If you start thinking about the Lakers' record, that's when you're going to slip up."

Besides, streaks don't come with championship rings.

"Not at all," Haslem said.

Sunshine State teams gleaming in NCAA spotlight



GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP)—March Madness in the Sunshine State

has long meant little to most people in Florida.

Sure, the Florida Gators have been an NCAA tournament staple during coach Billy Donovan's tenure, which includes back-to-back national championships (2006-07).

Everywhere else in the football-frenzied state, though, the closest fans usually get to college basketball's biggest stage is taking part in office pools and watching bracket-busting games on television.

Oh, have things changed this week.

With second-seeded Miami, third-seeded Florida and darling Florida Gulf Coast advancing in the NCAA tournament, basketball has taken center stage all across the peninsula. Throw in the Miami Heat's 27-game winning streak, six shy of tying the NBA record set by the 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers, and hoops is the hottest thing going in Florida.

Spring football? Not now. Baseball spring training? Please. Even the beautiful beaches can't compete with what's happening on the hardwood.

"This time of year, so many people are captivated by the NCAA tournament," Donovan said Tuesday. "Certainly, when you have three teams from the state of Florida still playing in the NCAA tournament and in the Sweet 16, I think it's certainly going to draw a lot of attention to basketball."

It's certainly a change, too.



Florida Gulf Coast's Sherwood Brown, center, celebrates with teammates after their 81-71 win over San Diego State in a third-round game in the NCAA college basketball tournament, Sunday, March 24, 2013, in Philadelphia. AP

Not only does Florida have three schools in the round of 16 for the first time, each program reached milestones in this NCAA tournament.

Miami, the No. 2 seed in the East Regional, earned its highest seeding in school history and made it to the round of 16 for the first time since 2000 and second time since joining Division I in 1985. The Hurricanes face third-seeded Marquette on Thursday in Washington, D.C.

Florida, the No. 3 seed in the South Regional, advanced to round of 16 for the third consecutive year—the first time that's happened in the program's 18 tournament appearances. The Gators play streaking Florida

Gulf Coast on Friday night in Arlington, Texas.

And there's little left to say about Florida Gulf Coast, which became the first 15 seed to advance to the round of 16 in tournament history. The Eagles knocked off Georgetown and San Diego State in Philadelphia over the weekend to make history, capturing fans along the way with their up-tempo offense, alley-oop passes and high-flying dunks.

When FGCU players returned to class Monday, they were greeted by applause. Later that night, about 4,000 fans attended a pep rally inside the school's arena to celebrate the program's accomplishment.

Can the run really continue?

"We think we can compete with them," coach Andy Enfield said. "If we play well, we'll have a chance to win the game."

Donovan agrees, saying FGCU shouldn't be considered "Cinderella" at this point.

"The country may give a team a label, but we never do that," Donovan said. "This is a really good team that has played exceptionally well, that is maybe playing as well as anyone in the country right now. The seeding and all that stuff, it doesn't mean anything. When the ball goes up in the air, you're playing against each other. This is a team that beat Miami, beat Georgetown, knocked off San Diego State. They went into their conference

championship, basically on the road, and beat Mercer on their home court.

"You don't do those things unless you are really good."

With Florida, Florida State and Miami, the state enjoyed unparalleled football success for decades.

The Gators (1996, 2006 and 2008), Seminoles (1993 and 1999) and Hurricanes (1983, 1987, 1989, 1991 and 2001) have combined for 10 national championships and nearly as many runner-up finishes. Adding in pockets of success by the NFL's Miami Dolphins, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Jacksonville Jaguars, and there's plenty of traction for the state's love af-

fair with football.

Basketball, meanwhile, has always been a distance second even with the Heat and Gators winning titles.

Just not this week.

When Heat assistant coach Bob McAdoo called Florida a "basketball state," it caught former Florida player and current Heat forward Udonis Haslem off guard.

"I just kind of laughed it off," Haslem said. "But if you think about it right now, it's a good time to be a basketball fan and a basketball player in the state of Florida. It's all going really well."

Realistically, it won't last.

When the NCAA tournament ends, football in Florida will reclaim its front-and-center spot while basketball fades into the background for another year.

In the meantime, those guys on the hardwood can just enjoy the spotlight.

"I totally understand that football gets seen maybe in a different light with Miami, Florida State and Florida, South Florida," Donovan said. "But I think the one thing when you look at players that have come out, whether it be Kenny Boynton or Austin Rivers, there's been terrific players that have come out of this state. A lot of these rosters, whether it be our roster or Florida Gulf Coast or Miami, there's a lot of Florida kids."

"I think this is a very, very good state as it relates to basketball at the high school level and I think this state is very fortunate that we have a lot of really, really good high school coaches in the state of Florida."



ORLANDO, Fla.

(AP)—Life must be going well for Tiger Woods when he can make headlines in the gossip pages for dating Olympic ski champion Lindsey Vonn and in the sports pages for winning Bay Hill and returning to No. 1 in the world.

All in the same week.

The studio photos of Woods and Vonn that were posted on their Facebook pages looked more suitable for a catalog showcasing their clothing sponsors. Far more natural were the poses Woods struck Monday afternoon with Arnold Palmer after winning his tournament—left arm draped around Palmer's shoulder, both unable to contain their laughter over whatever was said that could not be repeated.

"But it was funny," Woods said, breaking into a broad grin as he replayed the exchange in his mind. "Really funny, actually."

Yes, Woods appears to be in a happy place.

Winning does that, and Woods is starting to win with alarming frequency. In the one year and two weeks since he limped off the course at Doral with tightness in his left Achilles tendon—the same injury that forced him

Is he back? Only Tiger Woods knows for sure

to miss two majors in 2011—Woods has won six times in his last 20 starts on the PGA Tour. In his three wins this year, no one got closer than two shots at any point in the final round.

The limp has been replaced by a swagger.

"He looks a lot more comfortable out there. He doesn't really miss many shots. And if he does, it's not by a whole lot," said Rickie Fowler, who played with Woods in the final group and has seen plenty of him at practice at The Medalist in South Florida, where both are members.

"You know when another guy is playing well and he's on top of his game," Fowler added. "He's got a little something."

Haven't we heard this before?

Remember, Woods won Bay Hill a year ago and was declared the favorite to win a fifth green jacket at the Masters. Instead, he never broke par and wound up with his highest score as a pro at Augusta National and tied for 40th. He won the Memorial in his final event before the U.S. Open, and then shared the 36-hole lead at Olympic Club. He failed to finish in the top 20.

It's easy to get caught up in the hype because we know how good he was and believe he can be that good - if not better - again.

This latest win at Bay Hill, however, was different. It gave Woods consecutive wins for the first time since August 2009. Asked the last time he felt this good going into the Masters, he said, "It's been a few years."

"I think it shows that my game is consistent," Woods said. "It's at a high level."

Woods lost part of his mystique when he stopped making putts. Now he seems to make everything. Fowler learned that on the 12th hole Monday after making a 40-foot birdie putt to get within two shots of Woods, only to stand on the edge of the green and watch Woods match it with a 25-footer of his own.

The last time Woods won back-to-back tournaments heading into Augusta was in 2001, the year he won the Masters to complete his unprecedented sweep of the majors. Winning cannot be overstated, even for a guy who has won more than anyone in PGA Tour history except for Sam Snead.

Woods walked into his win-

ner's press conference with his cellphone in hand, scrolling down to read the messages, most of them from his staff. Rory McIlroy, whom he replaced at No. 1 in the world, sent him a text Tuesday morning.

Vonn shared her thoughts on Twitter: "Number 1 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

It wasn't long before Woods was asked the correlation between going public about dating Vonn and winning a tournament to go back to No. 1 for the first time since October 2010. There was a time when Woods answered questions about his personal life by saying, "That's none of your business." But he had fun with this one.

"You're reading way too much into this," he said with a grin.

The trouble with Woods is that he has never been an open book. Only he knows how badly his leg was injured. Only he knows how far along he was in the latest swing change under Sean Foley. Only he knows how much life as a divorced father of two has affected his game.

The greatest temptation Woods faces now is to resist wagging his finger at anyone who doubted whether he could

get back to No. 1 in the world, whether he could challenge Jack Nicklaus and his record 18 majors. Woods has been stuck on 14 majors since 2008.

The majors will be the ultimate measures. The Masters starts April 11, and if Woods isn't wearing a green jacket in Butler Cabin on Sunday night, it won't mean this was another false alarm. Golf is still hard. Woods only has a way of making it look easy.

Think back to one of the most dominant phases of his career. From August 1999 through March 2000, Woods won or finished second 10 times in 11 starts on the PGA Tour. The Masters was his next tournament, and it didn't look like there was any way he could lose. In the opening round, he three-putted for double bogey on No. 10 and three-putted from 12 feet for a triple bogey on No. 12. Woods shot 75 that day, never caught up and tied for fifth. That summer, he won the next three majors.

For Woods, it has always been about giving himself chances.

The Masters might be his best chance since 2009, when

he coughed up a two-shot lead to Y.E. Yang on the last day of the PGA Championship. Everything fell apart soon after that—revelations of his extramarital affairs, losing his wife in a divorce, finding a new swing coach, coping with more injuries to his left leg.

Woods never liked the notion that this is a comeback. When he won the Chevron World Challenge at the end of 2011—his first trophy of any kind in the two years since his car hit the fire hydrant and his personal life imploded—he cited the lyrics of LL Cool J: "Don't call it a comeback, I've been here for years."

But that wasn't necessarily true. He wasn't No. 1 in the world. He wasn't even the best player in golf. That was McIlroy, who won the U.S. Open by a record score in 2011 and the PGA Championship by a record margin a year later. McIlroy was looked upon as the favorite at the Masters until Woods won his last two tournaments.

If it's McIlroy in a green jacket at Augusta National, the road back for Woods will look longer than ever.

At the moment, Woods has turned the corner and is picking up speed.

Sun Palace Hotel Badminton Competition 2013 Winners

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Winners and organizers of the Sun Palace Hotel Singles and Doubles Badminton Competition 2013 pose for a group photo after the awards ceremony last Monday at the TSL Sports Complex.



Men's B singles champion Jordan Pangilinan is flanked by runner-up Joseph Santos, right, and third placer Mario Diola.



The top finishers in both singles and doubles divisions pose with Sun Palace co-owner Shirley Kim, right, and her son, Michael.



Sun Palace co-owner Shirley Kim, right, and her son, Michael, left, pose with men's doubles B third placers Cris Hilario and Brendon Talania.



The Top 3 finishers in the men's A doubles, from left, third placers Macoi Aguda and Ferdie Arago, champions Andreau Galvez and Jexler Caranto, and runners-up Sam Jones and Glenn Blautjens.



The Top 3 finishers in the men's C doubles, from left, third placers Daniel Shen and Eydie Uy, runners-up Panapa Peteru and Celso Agui, and champion Rommel Bartolome, who teamed up with Jeff Riman, not in the picture.



Men's A singles champion Ferdie Arago is flanked by Michael and Shirley Kim of tournament sponsor Sun Palace.



From left, women's B doubles third placers Annette Ta and Windy Fernandez, runners-up Janelle Pangilinan and Jen Cardinio, and champions Cris Obaldo and Jen Savellano, pose for a photo.



Men's C singles champion Daniel Shen shows his medals while posing with singles third placer Rommel Bartolome, center, and awards ceremony guest Michael Kim.



Sun Palace co-owner Shirley Kim, right, and her son, Michael, left, join the Top 3 finishers in the women's C singles, from left, Havika Farro, Roxie Lazaro, and champion Dianne Francisco.



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Arago leads men's champions list



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, Michael Kim, Jexler Caranto, Ferdie Arago, Andreau Galvez, and Shirley Kim pose for a photo during the awarding of medals to the Top 3 finishers in the men's singles A division of the Sun Palace tournament last Monday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

The Berks Blazers' Ferdie Arago and eight others were crowned champions in the men's division of the Sun Palace Hotel Singles and Doubles Badminton Competition 2013 last Monday at the TSL Sports Complex.

Inter Godfather's hands Wild Bill's first loss



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

An Inter Godfather's striker is sandwiched by two Wild Bill's defenders during the first half of their Division 1 game in the M-League last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER



InterGodfather's ended Wild Bill's two-game winning streak after pulling off a 2-1 victory in their Division

1 match in the M-League after shutting last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

CNMI National Men's Team member Peter Loken made the winning goal in the second half, while Arkie Reusora nailed the other goal in the first half. Wild Bill's lone goal in the match

came from Jack Thoensaket in the first half. Wild Bill's scored first, but Inter tied the match a few minutes before the halftime break off Reusora's header. Loken then broke the deadlock midway in the second half and Inter hung in there to improve to a 2-0-1 win-draw-loss record.

Wild Bill's holds the same mark and is forced to share the Division 1 lead in the six-team field.

Tan Holdings 1, Paire 0

In the first game last weekend, Tan Holdings broke into the win column after edging Paire.

Michael Hall delivered the winning goal for Tan Holdings, finding the back of the net 13 minutes before the game wrapped up. Tan Holdings now has a 1-1-1 slate for a tie for third to fourth place in the team standings.

Paire fell to a 1-0-2 card and dropped to the last spot.

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Arago notched the championship in the competitive men's A singles after sweeping Community Badminton Club's Andreau Galvez in the finals last Sunday, 21-17, 21-19. Arago marched into the

See ARAGO on Page 26

Cangco secures ONE FC bout in Singapore



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Swain "The Pain" Cangco stops for a photo opportunity while getting his medical forms in order at the Commonwealth Health Center on Tuesday.

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER



Saipan's Swain "The Pain" Cangco of MCA MMA took a short notice opportunity to be part of the fight card in the ONE Fighting Championship's upcoming Kings & Champions event at the Singapore Indoor Stadium this April 5.

He will be paired against Evolve MMA's Jake Butler of the U.S. in a light heavyweight

See CANGCO on Page 26

4 gain MVP honors in DLX caging



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

SSFM's Leo Galarse goes for a back to the basket shot against Docomo Pacific defenders during their title game in Division A of the DLX/Anchor Strong caging last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER



Four won the coveted Most Valuable Player awards in the 2013 DLX/Anchor Strong Invitational Basketball League that concluded last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

In the Division B, Adobo's Genesis Mamaril and Shane Deleon Guerrero took the regular and Finals MVP plums. Mamaril showed consistency for Adobo, averaging close to double figures in scoring every game and helping the team sweep the regular season (9-0) and win two games in the playoffs to clinch the division championship.

In their tough 71-68 semis win over Maplas La Mani, the Adobo shooting guard scored 16 points and then in their 66-62 title victory over Gualo Rai/Morales, Mamaril contributed 9 points. He made a rare 4-point play in the first quarter, as he was bumped and fell on the ground, but still nailed the triple against two Gualo Rai/Morales defenders. His and-1 play snapped Gualo Rai/Morales's rally and brought momentum of the game back to Adobo.

Gualo Rai/Morales continued to play catch up
See MVP on Page 26